

DISRUPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY THROUGH AN ETHICS OF CARE IN SOUTH AFRICA

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Abstract

The study on which this dissertation reports, argued that the newly reformed university policies and practices of the four public universities in the Western Cape still affect students from poor schools in a considerable way, as they still seem to struggle to gain access into higher education, even after the enactment of the White Paper for Post School Education of 2013. My argument is corroborated by findings and conclusions that ensued after the conceptual analysis of policy structures of the four public universities under study. The findings also exposed the university system in general as an elitist institution that is unable to change or be changed to recognise the poor. The argument is that the strategies the universities utilise to integrate students into the university system intensify this setback, as those strategies do not attempt to increase universities' capacity to grant access to poor students, who are incidentally fatalities of the apartheid system. Instead, the universities want the students to bring the same capabilities as their private and former Model C-schooled counterparts. Because of this practice, the university system appears to favour affluent students, which then compounds the social inequity at universities. My contention in the study therefore was that the university system ought to embrace approaches such as an ethics of care to disrupt the alienating culture within their policy processes. The ethics of care as the disruption paradigm may achieve a reconceptualised notion of external inclusion by which lived experiences of the vast majority of poor students can be accommodated, and may also introduce a conciliatory paradigm to higher education, from which social justice can be attained.

In the study, I have used 'poor students' interchangeably with 'black students from poor schools', as the colour of poverty in South Africa, even after 25 years of democracy, is still predominantly black.

Key concepts: Access, exclusion, disruption, ethics of care, social inequity, social justice and white privilege.

Opsomming

Die navorsing waaroor hierdie proefskrif verslag doen, het van die standpunt uitgegaan dat die nuut hervormde universiteitsbeleide en -praktyke van die vier openbare universiteite in die Wes-Kaap steeds studente afkomstig arm skole nadelig beïnvloed, aangesien dit lyk asof hulle steeds sukkel om toegang tot hoër onderwys te kry, selfs ná die Witskrif oor Naskoolse Onderwys en Opleiding. My argument word bevestig deur bevindings en gevolgtrekkings wat gevolg het ná die konseptuele ontleding van beleidstrukture van die vier openbare universiteite in die studie. Die bevindings dui ook op die universiteitstelsel in die algemeen as 'n elitistiese instelling wat nie kan verander of verander kan word om die armes te erken nie. Die argument is dat die strategieë wat die universiteite gebruik om studente in die universiteitstelsel te integreer hierdie agterstand versterk, aangesien die strategieë nie poog om die vermoë van universiteite om toegang aan arm studente te verleen, wat toevallig oorblyfsels van die apartheidsstelsel is, te vergemaklik nie. In plaas daarvan wil die universiteite hê dat die studente dieselfde vermoëns as hulle eweknieë uit privaat en voormalige Model C-skole sal hê. As gevolg van hierdie praktyk blyk dit dat die universiteitstelsel goeie studente bevoordeel, wat dan die maatskaplike ongelikheid by universiteite vererger. My standpunt in die navorsing was dus dat die universiteitstelsel benaderings soos 'n etiek van omgee moet gebruik om die vervreemdende kultuur in hulle beleidsprosesse te ontwig. Die etiek van omgee as die ontwigtingsparadigma kan 'n herkonseptualiseerde opvatting van eksterne insluiting bewerkstellig waardeur die deurleefde ervarings van die oorgrote meerderheid arme studente geakkommodeer kan word en wat ook 'n versoenende paradigma na hoër onderwys kan bring, waardeur maatskaplike geregtigheid bereik kan word.

In dié navorsing het ek 'arm studente' afwisselend met 'swart studente uit arm skole' gebruik, aangesien die kleur van armoede in Suid-Afrika, selfs na 25 jaar van demokrasie, steeds oorwegend swart is.

Sleutelbegrippe: Toegang uitsluiting, ontwigting, etiek van omgee, maatskaplike ongelikheid, maatskaplike geregtigheid en wit voorreg.

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Dedication

To my parents

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

APS	admission points score
AQL	academic and quantitative literacy
ARWU	Academic Ranking of World Universities
ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
B Ch D	Bachelor of Dental Surgery
Brexit	British exit
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CHET	Centre for Higher Education Trust
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
CUT	Central University of Technology
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DUT	Durban University of Technology
EU	European Union
FPS	faculty points score
FTE	full-time equivalency
GAA	Group Areas Act
GATT	General Agreement of Trade and Tariff
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth Employment and Redistribution
HAIs	historically advantaged institutions
HDIIs	historically disadvantaged institutions
HE	higher education

MAT	Mathematics Test
MUT	Mangosuthu University of Technology
NBT	National Benchmark Tests
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
Nated	National Accredited Technical Education Diploma
NEDLAC	The National Economic Development and Labour Council
NDP	National Development Plan
NEET	not in education, employment or training
NGP	New Growth Path
NMMU	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
NP	National Party
NPHE	National Plan for Higher Education
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSFAS	National Student Financial Aid Scheme
NWU	North-West University
OBE	outcome-based education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PenTech	Peninsula Technikon
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RU	Rhodes University
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SETA	Skills Education Training Authorities
SU	Stellenbosch University
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei

TUT	Tshwane University of Technology
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFH	University of Fort Hare
UFS	University of Free State
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UL	University of Limpopo
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
Univen	University of Venda
Unisa	University of South Africa
UP	University of Pretoria
UWC	University of the Western Cape
UZ	University of Zululand
VUT	Vaal University of Technology
Wits	University of the Witwatersrand
WPPSET	White Paper for Post-school Education and Training
WPS	weighted points score
WSU	Walter Sisulu University

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Foreword

As a build-up to my discourse I first want to share this short narrative in anticipation that it may highlight the motivation behind the pursuit of this study. As a student who is a product of poor schools, I feel motivated to draw attention to social injustice that is prevalent in higher education. To some, discoursing social inequality in higher education is a polemic subject that tends to make the privileged few uncomfortable. In many instances, South Africans tend to overlook the fact that higher education encounters are inclined to favour those with significant social, cultural and economic capital. To a certain degree, I sometimes wonder whether the discourses that highlight injustices in higher education are not wasted efforts, considering that neo-liberalism informs public policy direction in South Africa, and social inequality is somewhat of a norm within free-market economies. In a way, this suggests that inequality is still an accepted way of life in South Africa. But then again, if I were to let go, I imagine that I would have failed my convictions, and somewhat would have failed those who have given me a voice and betrayed those who imparted in me the value of showing concern for others. I recognise that I do not have all the answers, but I have a conviction that with our persistence, conditions in higher education might eventually improve. In reality, South Africa should denounce coloniality, as coloniality disenfranchised black people, and sadly even within a democratic state, under the auspices of globalisation and policy fragmentation, coloniality continues to disenfranchise the same group of people who had been disenfranchised by the apartheid system. Decolonisation should include upsetting the foundations of apartheid by expanding the manner by which teaching and learning take place. This would mean the development of African languages to academic languages so that in their quest to embrace global competitiveness, HE institutions to not leave anyone behind. Besides, it may seem a generalisation, but a large number of those who are still marginalised tend to internalise injustice, as this also makes them start affirming inequality as a norm, and start believing that they might not be giving their best; hence, the exclusion from experiencing higher education. The students, with whom I empathise, do not lack the ability to cope in higher education; they lack opportunities. If institutions would provide those opportunities, they need to acknowledge lived experience, as many of the students about whom I discourse had never experienced the encounters that the privileged savoured.

Nevertheless, the journey that led to this doctoral study began in Soweto, Johannesburg, where my identity was shaped. The environment within which I grew up nurtured my interest in books and education. My parents were both teachers, and took their vocation seriously. Our household was a hub of activity for the many children in the house: learners who needed care and whom my parents took in from their schools, and cousins, all cramped in our four-roomed house, because that was how black people lived under the apartheid government – confined in small spaces. To this day, I am petrified of confined spaces, although some of my best memories and my identity were shaped in those spaces.

From those confined spaces, I learnt to be selfless, and I also learnt about resilience – watching the groups that shaped me make it against the odds. Because I grew up in the heart of apartheid, the distress of the apartheid years bestowed wisdom on me, my fears became courage, and the suffering has turned to strength to continue in this journey of becoming. The values that I have mentioned fuelled my determination to proceed in the journey of my becoming, to carve a path for those that come after me, and to ensure that their dreams also become a reality.

Chapter 1

MAKING A CASE FOR UNPREJUDICED APPROACHES TOWARDS EQUITABLE HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS IN THE WESTERN CAPE

1.1 Introduction: Outline plan

I have embarked on this philosophical study to argue for the disruption of what seems to be the systematic exclusion of poor students from gaining access into higher education (HE) in the Western Cape. To pursue this discourse, I started with reacquainting myself with policy changes in the South African HE sector, that started taking shape after the 1994 democratic elections, specifically the two enacted White Papers for HE, the White Paper 3 of 1997 and the White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (WPPSET) of 2013.

The policy outline was sought to enrich my analysis of access policies and practices of the universities in my study, namely Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), the University of Cape Town (UCT), Stellenbosch University (SU) and the University of the Western Cape (UWC). The access policies of the four universities were examined to address the question that this study sought to answer, “Do universities in the Western Cape provide sufficient support to aid poor students gain access to higher education?” The intention was to dichotomise the attempts made by universities towards transformation, and policy implementation against policies and practices that contradict the transformative agenda conceived to transition South African HE from its divided past. The anticipation thereof was that the outcome would, to an extent, outline the manner by which the university systems preclude poor students from gaining access to HE. Contemporary philosophical approaches that uphold caring and attainment of social justice as a philosophy were explored to ascertain prospects of a new paradigm that could detect and address the overt and covert exclusive nature of HE, with the outcome being to engender social justice. I begin with looking at the shapes of imbalances in HE.

1.2 Contours of customary imbalances in HE in South Africa

The expectation of democracy, which succeeded the 1994 elections in South Africa, brought a sense of optimism and assurance towards new beginnings, very different from the distressful

socio-economic deprivation experienced by black South Africans during the apartheid era. An article written for the South African History Online (2017) and the University of York Collaborative Project, corroborates the freedom euphoria enthusiasm, and then alludes to the effects of economic disparities of the apartheid era on current social imbalances. The article states that the social imbalances cut across all polities in South Africa, and have converted enthusiasm to apathy. It is further argued that the espousal of the neoliberalism ideology of South Africa, beginning in 1996, through the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, followed by other neoliberal-fuelled policies had to some extent resuscitated the socioeconomic imbalances of the apartheid era. These neoliberal strategies tend to focus only on macroeconomic objectives (i.e. economic growth, full employment, price stability, income equality and balance of payment symmetry) and somewhat overlook zooming in to social challenges that are unintended consequences of the policies. The neoliberal strategies referred to are –

- the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) in 2005;
- the New Growth Path (NGP) in 2010; and
- the National Development Plan (NDP) in 2013, which is the long-term socio-economic development roadmap for South Africa.

According to South African History Online (2017), the African racial group continues to suffer the consequences, as they still are disproportionately the economically marginalised group.

All these developments seem to have a weighty influence on education, particularly HE, since HE is the level that is sought for social mobility, and unfortunately it becomes inaccessible to the poor, because their schooling encounters tend to stand in the way of their ability to attain this tool. Marginson (2016:415) concurs, and then comments that, while HE cannot guarantee social success for students from poor backgrounds, in terms of social averages it continues to make a difference.

From this interpretation of the contours that shape development in South Africa, it is sufficient for me to view the 2015–2017 demonstrations at universities, which carried the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall rhetoric, as triggered by the inescapable imbalances that continued to plague South Africa, and were perceived as the continuation of white privilege, as

to a degree HE seems to favour the privileged students, because their encounters make it easier for them to gain access to HE. Poor students seem to get the short end of the stick worldwide. Marginson (2016:415), although writing about American encounters, highlights patterns that are similar to the case in South Africa, where he mentions that education provides better odds of social protection, but it cannot always provide the leap upwards in society. However, whether it provides protection or advance, its benefits are largely confined to the affluent part of society.

White privilege, in the context of this thesis, refers to the denial of the existence of disparities in HE, and which, through Carr's lens (2016:54), the denial is described as an ideology of meritocracy, "colour blindness" (Carr 2016:51), and the supposed neutrality of capitalism. Using Carr's lens, I argue that it is evident that the HE institutions in my study seem trapped by the exclusive approaches used to exclude black students from gaining access to HE in the past, as their use of meritocracy revives the disqualification of poor students from gaining access to HE, yet the DHET (2013:1) acknowledges meritocracy as one of the challenges experienced by poor students through the statement "[p]oorer students have to fit in with systems that were designed for students from relatively privileged backgrounds." This statement suggests there are aspects of the policy framework that somewhat fail poor students. The poor students mentioned here are unfortunately black as the colour of poverty is still largely black in South Africa. So, opting for meritocracy to drive access policies, is somewhat idealistic considering that South Africa is an unequal environment, and that the social position and lived experiences of students from poor schools find themselves not to be at fault, as they are victims of circumstances, since the apartheid system predetermined their livelihoods.

Meritocracy has also made the institutions fail to align, and implement access and equity policies as outlined in the White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education of 1997 (Department of Education [DoE] 1997) and the White Paper for post-school education and training of 2013 (DHET, 2013) respectively. More to the point is that meritocracy does not take into consideration the lived experiences of poor students; hence, my focus in the study was on the disruption of this alienating character of the university system. In my argument, I posit an ethics of care as an apposite paradigm that could cultivate capacities that are able to include students from poor schools.

Mouton, Louw and Strydom (2013:286, 288) accentuate the present dilemma in HE when they state that access and student funding are central to students' challenges in HE, and that these challenges are still manifested according to race, gender and social class biases. Mouton et al.'s other claim is that a large number of those that still struggle to gain access to HE are black, and mostly from poor schools, as their schooling encounters leave them with average proficiencies to navigate HE, not to mention capital to navigate the affluent university system (Mouton, Louw and Strydom (2013:286, 288)

My reflection on the challenges I have discussed above is the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training of the Department of Higher Education and Training, also contributes to poor students' dilemma, because the policy framework seems to have bought into a neoliberal ideology, and is full of paradoxes that can, to an extent, be misrepresented by institutions of higher learning. For example, the general overview of the policy document is the differentiation of students, thus categorising students according to their aptitudes, meaning there will be those who would be able to pursue HE, and those who do not possess required proficiencies in HE are expected to choose the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) route. The White Paper for Post School Education and Training states:

Despite very significant growth, South Africa still has a post-school education and training system that does not offer sufficient places to the many youth and adults seeking education and training. Expansion is needed; both in terms of numbers of available places, and the types of education and training that are available. There should be greater differentiation and diversity among our institutions in order to provide for the wide variety of need of both students and employers. (DHET, 2013:2)

Although this extract does not define the scope and limitation of this differentiation, it does however infer that there will be those students who can only be placed in TVETs. Arguing from Carr's point of view, my contention is, considering the imbalances that have also been cited by Cornish-Jenkins, the TVET route seems to have been established for students from poor schools, as in the principle of meritocracy, if students do not possess proficiencies for university they have no business to want to be part of that system, therefore the TVET route should be an ideal offering for them. In addition, because of the bar that has been set too high to access an HE institution through another neoliberal tool, the national benchmarking tests (NBT), students from

poor schools have no other option but to take the TVET route. My concern in relation to this matter is that the TVETs seem to have been carved for black students, as that is where they end up in large numbers, since it is becoming more and more difficult to gain access to the university system. To support this claim I have drawn from Post-School Education and Training Monitor statistics (2019:62) where explanation that the TVET college enrolment has grown fast amongst black individuals, increasing from 83.9% in 2010 to 92.1% in 2016. Not that there is something wrong with the TVETs education, as these are the institutions that produce artisans, but the problem arises when the TVET system is used to accommodate students that are excluded by HE institutions that are reluctant to transform.

On the other hand, although I have used the above extract to illustrate the aspect of differentiation as one of the paradoxes that appear in the White Paper, that seem to be used by HE institutions to exclude students from poor schools. For instance, if the White Paper states that the expansion needed to be created so that there is provision for everyone, the universities would feel no obligation to attempt to expand their institutions because there already are institutions that can accommodate students without HE proficiencies.

Additionally, the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training also mentions the matter of social justice, which seems to be overlooked by policymakers at university level, such as –

- the need to provide more types of courses and qualifications;
- more financial support for students;
- better quality education and training, and
- that the planned expansion of access needs to be affordable for potential students (DHET, 2013:7).

Suffice it to say, that perhaps the paradoxes that I have illustrated, among others, may be the reasons that policymakers do not prioritise poor students' dilemmas, as they can get away with not implementing these developments, the gateway being institutions' academic freedom and the institutional autonomy that are premised on non-interference by the state. I have discussed aspects of these barriers in Chapter 5 and 6.

The extensive purpose of WPPSET is deconstructed in Chapter 4, although part of my contention is the focus on skills development, perhaps to increase the participation of South Africa in the

global economy; hence, the drive to ensure that the TVETs are efficient, and are able to produce artisans. The elephant in the room is that the TVETs are turning out to be an offshore for poor students, since the covert exclusion of poor students from HE institutions seem to become more and more methodical, and resolute to ‘push’ the students towards a college education even though some students’ intentions are to attain university education. Having said that, I want to argue that attending TVETs should never be an issue, if it is out of free will. This can be regarded as a problem only if attending colleges becomes an inescapable choice.

Dr Nzimande’s preface in the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training corroborates my assumption that skills education generally plays a major role in this White Paper, probably because more than half (or 51%) of youths aged 18–24 claim to not have the financial means to pay for their tuition (Statistics South Africa [Stats SA], 2019). Dr Nzimande states that the 2013 White Paper is –

[A] representation of the government’s thinking in the area of higher education and training and is in line with the country’s key national policy documents including the National Development Plan, the New Growth Path, the Industrial Policy Action Plan and the draft Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (DHET, 2013:vii).

Ultimately, the focus of all these strategies seems to be to grow and restructure the economy of South Africa to “curb” unemployment, and ensure South Africa is able to be a global participant. I will discuss the effect of globalisation on South African HE in Chapter 3.

My general outlook on the matter of globalisation is that, apart from the democratic government having inherited an ailing economy from the apartheid government, globalisation has placed much pressure on South Africa to abandon righting the wrongs of apartheid with the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) for neo-liberal practices. These practices tend to become neutral in matters relating to inequality, and are endorsed in most policies starting from 1996. As a result, HE finds itself at these crossroads. The South African History Online 2017a substantiates this assertion and states that the new democratic government did not just abandon RDP, but was forced to do so, because it could not deliver on economic growth owing to the poor fiscal legacy from the apartheid government. Sadly, the implementation of GEAR, from 1996 intensified the impact of the triple threat to South Africa: unemployment,

poverty and inequality, especially since the movement of people and goods meant stiff competition. The reality of the matter is that this threat seems to be a permanent feature, and the pinch is felt more in black communities, contrary to the popular belief that South Africa has a growing black middle class.

Even in the face of new initiatives that replaced GEAR, such as ASGISA, NGP, and the NDP, social imbalances and unemployment seem glued onto the South African landscape, and this intensified the effect of inequality, and to some extent determines who get to access quality schooling and HE opportunities, and who gets to experience social mobility.

For these reasons, therefore, my contention is that the discourse surrounding equity and redress in HE needs new conceptions as the neoliberal-driven discourses contribute to the exclusion of poor students, especially since HE institutions under the study aim to fulfil the criteria set by international competitiveness and related efficiency criteria (Mouton et al., 2013:286). In this thesis, I therefore argue for a paradigm that will deliver principles that could disrupt the unjustifiable barriers, to successively engender social justice.

1.3 Motivation for the study

Dewey (1938) defines education as a scientific method by which [wo]man studies the world and acquires knowledge of meanings and values for insightful survival. Dewey also states that the concept of education is multifaceted; hence, the endless debates around educational issues. Dewey further says that scholars need to show some form of objectivity when engaging with meanings and values placed by others regarding educational matters, because if discourses are approached with prejudice, the discourses are likely to be compacted into the ‘right way’ or the ‘wrong way’ of doing things, instead of taking educational discourses as a means by which people can learn to adapt to a changing world.

To a certain degree, I would say Dewey’s philosophy on how education issues can be mediated, along with the findings of my MEd study, from which I highlighted the exclusion of black students at two historically advantaged institutions in the Western Cape (Ngwenya 2014:76). This inspired me to discuss ways to mitigate the exclusion of black students from HE, since the present processes and practices at the universities in my study seemed to alienate the poor

students. More to the point is that some access policies have undertones that are inflexible about the inclusion of students from poor schools. Another factor that has stimulated the pursuit of this study was the empirical evidence on the SU website, which tabulates the slow pace of the recruitment of black students at SU. The table below tabulates the 2018 students' recruitment in percentages.

STUDENTS BY RACE	WHITE	BLACK		COLOURED	INDIAN	ASIAN
Percentage	58.1%	20.1%		18.1%	3.1%	0.2%
		10.3%	9.8%			

The table illustrates that in 2018, 58.1% of enrolled students were white, 20.1% were African black, 18.1% coloured, 3.1% Indian and 0.2% Asian. In terms of home language, 47.8% indicated English, 37.8% Afrikaans, and 10.3% other official South African languages as their home language, and 4.1% other (international) languages (Statistical Profile: Stellenbosch University Online, 2019).

Further analysis of this statistics point at the probability of only 10.3% students were South African black students, with 9.8% being international students from other African countries. More than anything, my motivation to pursue this study was my desire to understand why the 20.1% cannot represent only black South African students and not a blend of African students that include students from other countries. Whether this is designed to be an illusion to present to the world that SU is diversified, because if one meets black students on campus, one can never tell if they are South Africans or are from other parts of Africa, since they are all black. One can only tell when you start talking to students. Or could it be that other African countries pay for their students, unlike the case with black South African students who cannot afford university fees, and may end up being a liability to the universities, by owing the institutions money, or not coping with their studies, or both. The Fallist Movements of 2015–2017 in the form of #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall movements, which overwhelmed many historically advantaged universities, bear evidence that the majority of black students cannot afford to pay

their way into HE. Suffice it to say that university fees are likely to remain a challenge, despite former Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Naledi Pandor, having committed R967 million to NSFAS to settle historic debt owed to universities by more than 52 000 students that were funded prior to 2018. The students, despite having received funding from NSFAS, found themselves owing money to the universities, as they had not been given the full amounts for their fees.

Freire's (1985:48) outlook associates this almost gloomy picture of the perennial exclusion of students to approaches often taken by policymakers when attempting to transform their universities. Freire argues that the concept of equity is often confused with equality. Freire makes a distinction between equity and equality in transformation. He recommends that strategies designed to promote equity should be framed in a manner that ensures that everyone gets the necessary tools to be successful in any endeavours. On the other hand, if the strategies are to promote equality, everyone should be equipped to start from the same position, at this point all people should have attained equity. My extrapolation of this perspective is that the policymakers of the HE institutions under study ought to acknowledge that the abilities of students who may want to pursue their studies at the four institutions in my study are shaped by their lived experiences. The lived experiences illuminate the students' socio-economic backgrounds and, up to a certain extent, academic encounters. I do not wish to make the assumption that all poor students attend poor schools, because some get bursaries to study at affluent schools. In many instances, some whose parents work as domestic workers tend to be given opportunities to attend former Model C schools by their parents' employers. So, because of these social imbalances, I believe it equally important to note that the apartheid history of South Africa created different socio-economic backgrounds; hence, the contention that the universities in my study ought to disrupt present policies with policies that are flexible, and that could promote equity, and engender social justice.

On the other hand, in this thesis, I contend that perhaps the root cause of inclusion or exclusion struggles distressing the universities in my study may have been the pressure exerted by the government's pursuit of democratic ideals. These democratic ideals led to the massification of higher education, which is premised in the context of increased HE enrolment, while the institutions in my study were only used to or rather interested in students that could bring them

dignity when being compared with other world universities. For example, nearly all the institutions in my study pride themselves on their cultivation of the notion of excellence and scholarship, which relays to the quality of the students they recruit. My contention in this regard is that poor students are bound to be left out since the competencies they get from their schools do not fairly cultivate the essential ‘virtue of excellence’ preferred by the institutions in my study, and that while the poor students are already marginalised by their schooling encounters the HE institutions in my study tend to also assess these students by the standard of the students that might have had better schooling encounters yet their schooling encounters and support structures are unequal. This also suggests that students from poor schools may always struggle to meet the faculty point scores, which are faculties’ admissions benchmark. So, my motivation in this regard was an attempt to find a way around these challenges, since fees are just a small, yet noticeable, part of the problem. Faculty point scores and the NBTs are a bigger challenge. Take into consideration that before a student pays fees, he or she first have to gain access to the university.

Also, since another problem for poor students has been their assimilation into either English or Afrikaans medium of instruction, the students that form part of my discourse are mostly second or third language English or Afrikaans-speakers, who have to do their studies in English, because most universities use English as the language of instruction. I found that the language issue could also be disaffecting, because the absence of one’s language often nullifies one’s existence. Most university systems seem to reject poor students because of poor English language ability, which does not necessarily define a lack of aptitude, but somehow the institutions in my study seem to imply that it does, because somehow students do not gain access if they do not perform well in their NBTs, which consist of academic and quantitative literacy (AQL) and Mathematics (MAT) tests. What is even more agonising, is that if students are not excluded, those students seem to be pushed towards the faculties that are not rigid. In many instances these faculties tend to be the Arts, Social Sciences and others like them, mostly in Humanities. I elaborate on this impasse in Chapter 5 as a challenge that typecast poor students.

Although I relate to some of the challenges experienced by students from poor schools, my struggle may not be the same as that of the currently young students, because I am an adult learner, and have gathered enough life experience to help me navigate the university system.

Even so, I have had my own confrontations with symbolic violence, which can be described as some form of non-physical violence manifested in the power dynamics between social groups. For example, in my MEd thesis I indicated that SU rejected me a number of times before I was accepted into the MEd programme. I started by applying for a BEd (Hons) programme, and I was rejected, then I applied for a MEd programme, and I was rejected twice before being accepted into the programme. This was a pity, because the problem was neither my entrance mark, nor language challenges. However, I think my exclusion should be linked to a delay in transformation. When I look back, I realise that perhaps the university policies, in the form of access policies, were perhaps not as adaptable to make concession for black students as they are today. Nevertheless, in my MEd class we were three black South Africans (two males and one female, myself), against the five Namibians (all black), five coloured students, and six white students (we started with six white students, but one abandoned her studies). On reflection, I am still left wondering if this practice was deliberate or happened by chance.

In any event, although my rejection by SU affected my self-esteem, I was not deterred. Instead of giving up, I became persistent, and my determination earned me an invitation to an interview, and later acceptance into the programme. Because of my experiences; therefore, my endeavour through this study has been to highlight the perennial challenges experienced by poor students, who are equally thirsty for HE, but are likely to be excluded due to their lack of capital if the seemingly alienating culture of universities is not disrupted.

Van Wyk (2009:332) typifies institutional culture as general traditions at universities, while he cautiously states that the concept of institutional culture has not been sufficiently studied and that more research is needed. Van Wyk (2009:335) explains, “[c]ulture makes its presence known whenever a new leader appears or there is change in managerial style”. He further states that culture tends to take on many different meanings and directions, the main reason why exploring institutional culture is difficult. Considering Van Wyk’s account of institutional culture, in the study, I talk about institutional culture as different experiences of students at the four institutions in my study. I refer to institutional culture in Chapter 6, as I write about how the ethics of care as an outlook, can improve the hostile university culture.

The findings of this study depict the four institutions in my study as ‘sluggish’ when it comes to the needs of poor students. The institutions’ policies do not attempt to strike a balance between the needs of the students with a competitive edge and the needs of poor students. I write about this issue extensively in Chapter 5. In the discussion, I also refer to despondency at most universities in my study, because the new policies seem to have been added to old policies, although it does seem like complete new policies were created.

Freire (1985:48) commends the dissolution of alienating systems as a possibility to attaining social justice. Freire goes on to say that the undertaking should be to transform the structures so that the oppressed are completely included, instead of the integration of the oppressed into the structure of oppression. In the case of my study, this may mean that the HE institutions in my study ought to try and eradicate the overpowering culture that has been part of the apartheid legacy, and develop a new legacy that promotes inclusivity hence my argument for the disruption of endeavours and processes that are likely to discourage reforms within HE. In my discourse, I draw on Noddings (2013), whose canonical argument on caring seems to have an ability to influence progressive reforms. In Chapter 6, I broaden my discussion on the ethics of care theory, and thus explain how it can open opportunities for poor students.

1.4 Research problem

Mouton et al. (2013:286) proclaim that one of the biggest challenges in HE has been the commercialisation of HE. So do Christensen and Eyring (2011:xx), who, although writing about the United States of America, their discourse could be mistaken as a discourse on the South African problem. This generally tells the story of the exclusion of poor students from affluent HE institutions as a worldwide phenomenon. The institutions are not interested in students who lack the academic capital that is needed for global cooperativeness. The poor students’ dilemma is made worse by affordability, as the fee structures of affluent universities are extremely high. Christensen and Eyring (2011:xxi) claim that making university education expensive is deliberate, because universities want to attract the most capable and discerning students who would take their institutions onto the leader boards of academic ranking agencies. Mouton et al. (2013:286) place the criticism of these challenges upon neoliberalism pressures. They then echo Christensen and Eyring’s sentiments, and state that transformation in HE has been re-routed

since institutions started vying for international recognition, which resulted in issues of social justice occupying an inferior position.

If I compare the 2017 and 2018 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) presented by The Center for World-Class Universities at Shanghai Jiao Tong University as example, considering the recognition and positions that five South African universities were placed in, alongside the reason behind the rankings, which are more on academic reputation one may tend to understand why institutions may want students with affluent academic capabilities as they can ensure the institutions' reputation is intact. Incidentally, the five recognised universities form part of the historically advantaged institutions and are the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), the University of Cape Town (UCT), Stellenbosch University (SU), the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), (Staff writer: Business Tech Online, 2017). In the 2018 ranking, University of Pretoria (UP) has moved to the top 500, and UJ and UKZN were in the top 800 (Staff writer: Business Tech Online, 2019).

The variation in the placing of the two universities that have moved down to top the 800 institutions is influenced by the methodologies that ARWU uses to rate universities. According to Business Tech, the Center for World-Class Universities weighted the institutions on the following indicators: alumni of an institution winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, staff of an institution winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, highly cited researchers in 21 broad subject categories, papers published in Nature and Science, papers in science citation and social science citation indices, and per capita academic performance of an institution (Staff Writer: Business Tech Online, 2019a). This therefore emphasises the pressure that globalisation places on developing countries. The expectation is that the developing countries, such as South Africa, are expected to simulate trends set by countries with HE institutions that are advanced, and who have cultures that have been constructed for years. For example, Harvard was established in 1636 (Harvard at a glance: Harvard Online, 2019), which suggests that the university culture of Harvard has had a chance to grow for a number of years to become the formidable force that it is today. Because of the established culture, institutions such as Harvard tend to be the ones to dictate to the rest of the universities in the world, which becomes an unfair practice, as while these institutions have honed their trade, some of the universities still need to address national needs, such as many of the South African universities.

Ensuing from the above tensions, the general concept of my problem statement is the pervasive partiality within South African HE institutions systems, which has not changed, even after the introduction of policy transformation in South African HE. In essence, although after 1994 South Africa has had policies introduced to redress imbalances constructed by the apartheid government, the implementation of the redress policies seem to have been deferred as South Africa HE seems to have bought into internationalisation to drive their access policies, as somehow the universities under study seem to ignore the students' lived experience. Alatas (2000:23) equates internationalisation to intellectual imperialism, and describes it as one the processes that displaces attention from issues that should be of vital concern to Asian and African societies. Alatas mentions that there are parallels between economic and intellectual imperialism, as they share similar traits such as exploitation, tutelage, conformity, making dominated people play a secondary role, and the existence of intellectual rationalisation, which is an attempt to explain imperialism as necessary in human progress. For example, as South African universities see a need to conform to standards set by Harvard, and other university with traits similar to that of Harvard, it goes to show that a large number of universities are under the tutelage of these highly acclaimed universities, and this comes with intellectual imperialism, and sadly, the set standards preclude poor students from gaining access into HE, which they seek for social mobility. Alatas (2000:23) explains that in the tutelage system, "[t]he people dominated are considered a kind of ward. They are taught certain things, they are asked to do certain things, they are organized toward certain ends and purposes lay out by subjugating power". Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015:487) explains this form of subjugation as coloniality. Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues that in the current era coloniality is not easily recognised as it is now a somewhat invisible power structure, as it is "well-maintained in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspiration of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience". Against this backdrop, the question below is asked to ascertain the areas for disruption within policy structures of the institutions.

Research question

The main question for the study was: Do universities in the Western Cape provide sufficient support to aid poor students to gain access to higher education? From the main question, the following sub-questions were asked:

- What do universities in the Western Cape categorise as their roles in ensuring social justice for all students?
- What strategies do universities in the Western Cape have in place to support poor students to gain access to higher education?
- In what ways have these strategies been influenced by the ethics of care?

1.5 Methodological considerations

Since this study was focused on raising the ethics of care as an alternative in the quest to disrupt the partisan access practices used by the HE institutions in the study, the philosophical position that influences my methodologies, and perceptions when addressing the research question rely on perceptions of various philosophers such as Freire, Mc Laren, Greene, Noddings, Held, Slote, hooks, Young, Rancière, and other philosophers, whose ideologies argue for the attainment of social justice for all. As the conviction is a reconceptualised ethics of care, this study will incorporate philosophies obtainable from the viewpoints of the philosophers I have mentioned above. Aspects discoursed in this respect are resolute in forming a new concept of an ethics of care that is innovative, caring and capable of disrupting the overt and covert antagonistic practices in HE to mitigate the exclusion of poor students.

In my pursuit of this paradigm, I start with a discourse on Christensen's disruption theory lens, from which two disruption concepts are defined: sustaining disruption and disruptive innovation. The current study leaned towards innovative disruption, because with the sustaining disruption approach, existing programmes or processes are normally put together to become bigger and better, whereas disruptive innovation triggers a new path. For example, the five institutions Wits, UCT, SU, UJ, UKZN that have managed to get into the top 200 to 400 in the ARWU universities, are likely to opt for the sustaining disruption approach, as their goal is to become bigger and more like other world universities. I discuss this manifestation in Chapter 5, when I give a narrative of the vision and mission statements of the universities seeming convictions.

The question I then ask myself is where do these manifestations leave poor students? When taking this question into account, I point to the negative ramification that comes with accepted intellectual imperialism, and meritocracy, as try as they might to include students, the policies and practices of the universities keep pushing students from poor schools out of their system, as

the majority of these students do not have what the institutions need to climb the echelons outlined by ARWU, and other world ranking institutions, and the only likely place to accommodate these students are TVETs. From these observations therefore, my contention is that the institutions in my study ought to disrupt their systems innovatively in order to create opportunities that are inclusive of all students, notwithstanding their social standing, because in the manner that the WPPSET has been premised, education is not to be commercialised but a means to attain social justice (DHET 2013:4). Christensen and Eyring (2011:xxi) support this outlook and state that employees who have given up their lives to HE are there for learning and sharing the knowledge, and not to give the students the short end of the stick. Basically, my extrapolation of Christensen and Eyring is that institutions ought to look at the development of students, as opposed to allowing themselves to conform to world standards that continue to perpetuate the coloniality that continues to foster classism and racism.

Additionally, through hooks's (2003:83) outlook, from which she insinuates that there is something wrong with the academic world, as at universities and colleges the notion of service is linked to working on behalf of the institution, not on behalf of students and colleagues, I contend that there is a need for HE institutions to see a need to be part of restoration programmes, considering that the past has influenced social imbalances, and poor students need to be a national priority. If then, HE institutions begin to see themselves as channels of restoration, the gesture would readily engender social justice by offering students from poor schools a new chance in life, as their schooling backgrounds have rendered them ineffectual. Author hooks (2003:47) reasons that academic discourse needs to purport sensitivity and the accommodation of the other. She uses pluralism as one of those strategies that can counter distorted inclusion and diversity approaches. The same author also emphasises the change of mind-set, and the acceptance that obstacles exist, more so those that are manifested in racial biases.

My holistic criticism of the practices at the universities in my study is that they make HE seem to be an indulgence for affluent students, especially if we revert to how institutions are weighted upon by evaluating agencies, and by the way the institutions view themselves. The self-concept of the universities will forever remain a stab towards poor students as their lack of "academic excellence" and resources make them seem inadequate. In order to accommodate the poor students, the white privilege attitude needs to be discarded, policymakers need to acknowledge

that students from affluent schools always trump students from poor backgrounds in academic achievements, since the poor students' neighbourhoods and lived experience have a knock-on effect on the meagre proficiencies they present after school. So, hooks's assertion attests that HE policymakers need to accept that social inequities exist in order to be able to dislodge the perpetual exclusion from HE.

Young (2011:173) refers to a social connection model of responsibility, which stipulates that all members of a society need to redress structural injustice by dint of the fact that they contribute by their actions to its production and reproduction. Young also explains that history matters in the social connection notion, not to reproach, punish or demand compensation damages, but to show responsibility towards historic injustice. In the context of my study, I want to state that the theoretical perspectives that my study is grounded upon are not necessarily the "be all and end all" of my discourse, but were the foundation of my inquiry towards finding a paradigm that may potentially disrupt the status quo in the South African HE landscape, and engender social justice. Ultimately, when summing the above perceptions according to Noddings' ethics of care, as described in Slote (2007:12), that caring involves a 'displacement' of ordinary self-interest into unselfish concern for another person, and in caring someone who cares for another not only focuses on a particular individual, but is engrossed in that other person. My contention is that policymakers and implementers of policies need to show altruism and empathy towards poor students in order to convey an attitude that aims to dislocate hostile practices at universities.

1.6 Scope of the inquiry

I have embarked on this study taking into account Mouton et al. (2013), Alatas (2000) and WPPSET (2013) claims and declarations that for some reason intellectual imperialism seems to have become normalised, therefore my inquiry looks beyond the two South African policy frameworks I have used as context to investigate whether poor students are supported to gain access into the university system. I have analysed the transformation policies of universities, while also investigating the influence and consequence of globalisation in the recruitment of students. The methodology is interpretive and data collection is mostly based on desktop research. I have opted for this form of methodology, because qualitative approaches are said to be responsive to local situations, conditions and stakeholders' needs (Carter & Little,

2007:1318). As far as limitations are concerned, Elder, Pavalko and Clipp (1993) say cultural themes can be somewhat limiting when conducting a conceptual study. For example, at the beginning of this study, I anticipated language barriers since SU, one of the institutions in my study, is a historically Afrikaans institution, and Afrikaans is the language used in most of its policy documents. Fortunately for me, there were no language barriers, as SU policies are now documented in both English and Afrikaans to promote multilingualism. The only limitation has been the difficulty I experienced in accessing some information on the four university websites, since all four institutions store information by faculties, and this becomes a little confusing as the general information of an institution might say one thing, and the faculty information is a bit different to what the general information stipulates. Examples of these limitations are explained further in Chapter 5, where I discuss the general admission requirement of all institutions in my study. The common denominator for all institutions has been the National Senior Certificate (NSC) with an achievement rating of 4, and/or the point score of 20 credits of the university chosen from four subjects other than Mathematics or Mathematics Literacy, yet faculties give a different version of what is the general information. Another limitation is that UCT regularly updates its website, and it sometimes becomes difficult to catch up with the changes.

Lastly, since most of my work is based on desktop research, I had to include theoretical triangulation to authenticate some aspects of my findings by talking to some students to whom I had access and who attend these institutions.

1.7 Chapter outline

The results of the current study are presented in seven chapters, although there is Chapter 8 where I narrate the journey of my becoming. Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter, which contains the background to my study, my rationale and the research question and sub-questions. This chapter also offers a brief discussion of my conceptual framework, the scope of study, methodology and limitations. In Chapter 2, I delineate and explore theories and concepts that speak to practices that could disrupt exclusive undertones in HE, such as the notions of critical pedagogy, the theory of disruption, democratic education, the social connection, intellectual emancipation, and an ethics of care. The aim is to draw synergies from these perspectives to envision a paradigm that could engender social justice in higher education. In addition, the

synergised perspectives provide lenses to analyse data that has been gathered for this study. In Chapter 3, I explicate the reality of globalisation in South African politics, and its effect in the HE landscape. This is done as an endeavour to understand some of the routes taken by the universities in the study. Chapter 4 provides my deconstructive analysis of White Paper 3 and WPPSET to simplify the rationale behind the transformation policies of the universities. This study focused on the public universities in the Western Cape, two historically advantaged universities, and two historically disadvantaged universities and their transformation policies for the study. This chapter also provides data by which I deconstruct prevalent access and social equity challenges within the transformation outlines of the institutions in my study in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, I suggest an ethics of care as a paradigm, which the institutions in my study could find praxis. I start by delineating some of the findings in order to justify the proposed paradigm. My final chapter focuses on my reflections and implications if an ethics of care were to become a carefully chosen path to disrupt the alienating structures within the HE landscape.

Chapter 2

EXAMINING DIVERSE PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented a gloomy depiction of the current situation in HE. The dreariness in the circumstances is comprehended from the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall demonstrations that befell HE institutions from 2015–2017. The demonstrations highlighted the exclusive disposition (academic and financial exclusion) of the university systems, more so the systems of the historically advantaged institutions in my study. On account of this observation, one of my key arguments in the study is the university system is possibly failing to engender social justice, probably because embedded in the systems of the universities, are nuances that seem to suggest the subtle existence of Plato's philosophy of education, which was favoured by the apartheid government. Plato's philosophy of education promotes a structural-functionalist ideology. The message that is conveyed, is that certain levels of education can only be for those with superior abilities, leaving the rest to be trained as ordinary workers, artisans, or soldiers (Noddings, 1998:13). In the present university system, the principle of meritocracy, which tends to deny social justice, parallels structural functionalism, because it tends to be selective over who qualifies to participate in HE encounters. Take, for instance, the National Benchmark Tests project initiative (NBT), which is used by universities as a form of statutory requirement for university admission. The NBT seems to be used mostly as a gatekeeper in HE as it determines who can get into HE, and in many instances it shatters the dreams of many students from poor schools. As a result, poor students end up in TVETs in droves. The career pathway of TVETs is artisanship, which then emphasises my argument that South African HE and training utilises a structural-functionalism approach in their recruitment of students, that is, HE encounters are reachable only if students are academically affluent, meaning the students that may have had schooling encounters that prepared them to navigate HE. Sadly, HE institutions seem to neglect that students from poor schools are also interested in HE encounters but the majority of these students tend to lack the academic prowess required by HE institutions. It is the legacy of the apartheid system that continues to deprive these students opportunities that are similar to those who are academically affluent as their schools are still disadvantaged to this day. I discourse extensively on the NBT project being a barrier to social mobility in Chapters 5 and 6.

The other form of exclusion from the institutions in my study, to which I refer, is the university fee. For example, I compared BA tuition fees of one historically advantaged institution and one historically disadvantaged institution, which are R39 696 at SU and R29 550 at UWC. Considering that South Africa is still battling with its triple challenges, “issues of poverty, inequality, unemployment and hunger” (Van der Westhuizen & Swart, 2015:732), many students from poor schools usually cannot afford the tuition fees, accommodation, and sometimes meals; hence, the high dropout rate, and hence the students’ protest actions. My contention is that poor students also wish for upward social mobility, in the economic sense.

Although former State President, President Jacob Zuma, announced a fully subsidised “free” HE and training for poor and working class South African undergraduate students in December 2017, the universities seemed to struggle with the execution of this undertaking, leaving a number of students waiting long, and others waiting in vain for their National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) allowances. Careers Portal Online, 2018, quoted the former Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Naledi Pandor, as saying that the challenges the HE and training sector experienced at the time, in relation to the execution of “free” education, were more around a system integration between NSFAS and the universities, and that the government would assess all NSFAS processes and challenges to improve on the system moving forward.

Despite all the progress, one cannot help but wonder why ‘free’ education does not open opportunities for students from poor schools into historically advantaged institutions. I have put ‘free’ in inverted commas because I am still trying figure out how free is free. Apart from that, the main body offering the opportunity to attain free HE is the NSFAS, via fully subsidised government bursaries, but there are contractual obligations, with which NSFAS tend to shock students when they fail, especially since it is never really communicated that if NSFAS ‘funded’ students fail, they would be dropped and would have to pay back NSFAS funding. Additionally, there have been instances where students are rejected by the NSFAS system because of their student numbers. For example, if a student dropped out prior to the approval of free education, when they go back again the student is seen as someone who failed and is repeating the year.

Because of these challenges, the majority of students from poor schools are highly affected, so with this chapter I have explored mostly the contemporary philosophical perspectives to express

innovative views that can be used to let in the poor students who are continuously side-lined by university systems. I began with critical theory, which is a paradigm that took South Africa to the democratisation of education at large, followed by the theory of disruption to explain perspectives on how disruption functions. Social theorists who look at oppression and class domination, democratic education, and social connection were also explored. Finally, I explored an ethics of care to locate the means to acquire social equity and equality when taking a caring approach. The objective in the consideration of these philosophies were to unravel how these views can be interfaced in policy implementation, as well as being an endeavour to find a restructured concept of an ethics of care. In essence the idea in this chapter has been to develop an integrated paradigm, which can address all forms of biases directed at students from poor schools, while advocating for a caring approach in an endeavour to engender social justice purposefully at the universities in my study.

My discourse begins with Horkheimer's social philosophy outlook, followed by a narrative from Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and other critical theorists such as McLaren and Greene, to emphasise the existence of dominant cultures within the university system, which tend to perpetuate exclusion, and also emphasise a genuine need for a realistic purpose to mitigate these challenges. Additionally, since this study was conducted to seek a paradigm that could engender social justice, I have drawn from critical theory because it allows for far-reaching questioning of subjective and objective data, and that allows it to be extended to ethics of care, which this study is grounded on. After that I introduce Christensen's theory of disruption to give insight into how organisations and institutions could change their approach. The theory of disruption is explored alongside hooks's (real name Gloria Jean Watkins) (2003) democratic education and Young's (2011) social connection perspectives that discourse justice approaches to inclusion and democracy. Please note that hooks's name is used in lower case in the study since this is how she chooses to distinguish herself from her grandmother, whose name she adopted as a pen name. Lastly, I explored Noddings' (1998; 2013), Held's (2006) and Slote's (2007) ethics of care, from which I explain how caring can be processed, more especially in institutions of higher learning that have policies that are mostly inclined to exclude whomever the system deems burdensome. I envisioned that, not only with the theoretical perspectives discussed in this chapter, will I attempt to advocate ways by which social justice can be sought in HE, the theoretical notions also served

as conceptual lenses through which I later examined the existing university policies, to isolate areas in policymaking that could benefit from disruption.

Before launching into the theoretical perspectives, as a frame of reference I offer a baseline data of HE and training institutions to allow my discussion to flow from a particular setting. The baseline information is crucial to this chapter, as it illustrates the points of view that personify the institutions in my study, and how they functioned in the past, and what has influenced their contemporary way of life. Christensen and Eyring (2011:26) state that universities are products of their own histories, thus suggesting that any university dogma tends to reproduce the doctrine of the founding fathers of the institutions. The founding fathers refer to the founders of the institutions. When taking Christensen and Eyring's assertion as a lens to look at the institutional culture of the universities in my study, it is sufficient for me to say the institutional cultures of the universities in my study do reflect their histories. My interpretation of the institutional culture is taken from Van Wyk (2009:332), who defines institutional culture as universal forms of doing things at an institution(s), such as decision-making, overt or covert actions and symbolic communication systems. Van Wyk goes on to state that institutional cultures can be either alienating or accommodating. In essence, the institutional culture subtly explains the shared values of policymakers, and/or leadership of the institution according to Van Wyk, and therefore the baseline in the sub-section below will be able further to explain what the institutions in my study stand for.

2.1.1 South African higher education institutions and training institutions baseline data

In the present South African HE structure, universities are grouped into three institutional types: eleven traditional public universities, which provide theoretically oriented university degrees, six comprehensive public universities, which provide a combination of theoretically oriented university degrees and vocation oriented degrees, and eight public universities of technology that provide vocationally oriented diplomas and degrees. The latter category includes the University of Mpumalanga and Sol Plaatje University. There is also Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, which opened its doors in 2015, and focuses on teaching, research and community engagement.

The Technical Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVETs) group is comprised of 50 colleges spread over the nine South African provinces. The TVETs became part of higher education after the White Paper 2013: Building an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system came into effect (DHET, 2013). According to Bunting and Cloete (2010), the TVETs provide skills training. The TVETs were not a major part of this study, since my focus was on HE. I only refer to the TVETs here and there in the study, especially when I want to explain certain aspects that compare to HE institutions such as interest testing, and numeracy and literacy tests that students who are interested in the National Accredited Technical Education Diploma (Nated) programmes have to take. While conducting the study, I also spoke to someone who works in administration at one of the TVETs. She confirmed that of almost two thousand students that they recruit, only a handful graduate, which is around two hundred or three hundred students. This makes me wonder what happens to students when they drop out of TVETs.

Anyway, of the eleven traditional universities I have mentioned above, eight fell under the historically advantaged institutions (HAIs), namely University of Cape Town (UCT), University of Free State (UFS), University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), North West University (NWU), University of Pretoria (UP), Rhodes University (RU), Stellenbosch University (SU) and University of Witwatersrand (Wits). The University of Fort Hare (UFH), University of Limpopo (UL) and University of the Western Cape (UWC) catered for the historically disadvantaged students, mostly Africans, with UWC reserved for coloured people during the apartheid era. Ironically, the historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) still cater mostly for the historically disadvantaged students, even in a democracy. A number of factors can be linked to this, but in the interim my assumption is that the proximity between the institutions and students, and the reasonable fee structures of the institutions seem to be the determining factors over where the students would enrol.

On the other hand are the comprehensive university group, which include the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and the Nelson Mandela University (NMU), were part of the HAIs, with University of South Africa (Unisa) being a part-time and distance education institution. The University of Venda (Univen), Walter Sisulu University (WSU) and University of Zululand (UZ) were part of the HDIs. What seems interesting about this picture is the five HDIs (UFH, UL, WSU, Univen, and UZ) are located in the areas that were demarcated as self-governing states by

the apartheid government. The areas were noticeably economically arid as they were left rural, under-developed and sparsely populated because people move to cities to look for employment, and to an extent these areas are still economically arid. On the other hand, there is also UWC, which, although located in the Cape Metropole, it is nestled in an area that was zoned for coloured people.

The HAIs, on the other hand, were located in the hustle and bustle of the economically viable areas. For example, nearly all the HAIs are located in the major city centres in South Africa, and they had or have the luxury of drawing mostly academically and financially affluent students. In addition, the traditional HAIs were also recognisable by the privileged infrastructure, which allowed the institutions to recruit some of the ‘best’ performing students in the country. Strangely enough, even in recent years these institutions still seem to be telling their exclusive erstwhile story, that is if we draw from the symbolic #RhodesMustFall UCT protests, that relatively delineated the culture experienced by the students at this institution.

The Universities of Technology, on the contrary, consists of Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), Central University of Technology (CUT), Durban University of Technology (DUT), Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), Vaal University of Technology (VUT) and the two relatively new institutions Mpumalanga University, and Sol Plaatje University. Some of these institutions are also still characterised by their past historically advantaged and historically disadvantaged characteristics, discernible by the majority of students who attend these institutions presently. For instance, the student complement of MUT is black, essentially because it is situated in Umlazi Township outside Durban. Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who was at the time the Chief Minister of KwaZulu self-governing state, established this university. He established MUT to accommodate black students who had finished school, but could not afford university during the apartheid era, even when students did manage to get decent results.

This study however is focused on four HE institutions in the Western Cape, three traditional universities and one university of technology. The four HE institutions are identifiable through their history, which places them as two HAIs (UCT and SU), and two HDIs (CPUT and UWC). The latter two were zoned in the area reserved for coloured communities, as legislated in the

1950 Group Areas No. 41 (South African History Online, 2014). This act divided urban areas into racially segregated zones. As far-fetched as it may sound, it was a criminal offence to have members of one racial group residing in areas set aside for other races; hence, the two universities were for the most part utilised by coloured students. South African History Online (2014) corroborates this assertion when they state, “[w]hen the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 (GAA) was passed in 1950, it imposed control over interracial property transactions and property occupation throughout South Africa.” Nevertheless, the one part of CPUT formed part of the HAIs group, and was formerly known as Cape Technikon. The other was part of HDIs, and known as Peninsula Technikon, before the 2005 institutional mergers took place as introduced through the National Plan for Higher Education of 2001. The mergers were supposedly introduced to bridge the imbalances created by the apartheid laws, which left the HDIs ill resourced (OECD, 2008). Surprisingly enough, even with the 2019 allocations from the National Revenue Fund to each of the 26 South Africa universities and universities of technology, most HAIs came just below the two new institutions (Sol Plaatje and University of Mpumalanga), while most HDI were funded less than the rest, with Walter Sisulu being second from last. This just emphasises that there is absolutely no winning for HDI or poor students, as even with government funding these universities get the short end of the stick.

To corroborate this assertion, I have quoted Philip de Wet (2019) where he says:

South African universities will receive subsidies ranging from R647, 000 per student to R21, 000 per student from the national purse this year. That huge range includes start-up and specialist institutions, which receive much higher per-head funding, at the top end, and the gigantic distance-learning University of South Africa (Unisa) at the bottom end. But even excluding those unusual higher-education bodies, universities will receive starkly different levels of support from the government, ranging from nearly R80,000 per student for Rhodes University to just about R37,000 per person at Walter Sisulu University.

To deviate a little, I want to contend that it is odd that before I even get to deliberate on a theoretical framework that I feel obliged to allude to the institutional backdrop, what the backgrounds of these institutions stand for, and what such settings say about the poor students’ plight in this study. As little detailed as the given background is, it somehow expresses the perpetual exclusion of African students from the university system in the Western Cape. One

also wonders if the students were excluded because of the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950. If that were the case, why then did the apartheid government not create an institution in the Western Cape? Could it be that Africans were expected to study only at universities located in the self-governing states, or were expected to be only the so-called ‘hewers of wood, and drawers of water’ in the Western Cape? It is against this background that I argue for an ethics of care approach to try and alter this perennial exclusion of African students from higher education, and thus ensuring that social justice occurs.

Below my deliberation on the theoretical framework begins, and as I align my discussion, I refer to the asymmetrical power relations to accentuate and justify the need for an ethics of care approach.

2.2 Exploring caring approaches within critical theories

As I have elaborated above in my interpretation of the South African higher education and training's baseline data coloniality still seems embedded in the social structure of the university, and the concept of power and privilege still describe the economic substructures. This outlook may be narrowly focused on higher education but broadly explains the South African social structure. From this point of view I started with Horkheimer's materialism outlook to engaged with policy and the reality of university as both an entity and a bureaucracy in order to seek social and political transformation to support higher education. The materialist concept begins by explaining the production of the means to support human life and how these are distributed to society that is divided into classes. In South Africa there is an overlap between class and race because the majority of those that still continue to be marginalised are black, and who may never get to enjoy similar opportunities as others hence Horkheimer's emphasis in seeking resolutions that can take us to an equitable and equal world.

Horkheimer (1989:25) states:

The final goal of social philosophy is the philosophical interpretation of human life - insofar as humans are not mere individuals but members of a community. Social philosophy must therefore primarily concern itself with those phenomena that can be interpreted only in the context of social existence of humans such as the state, law, economy, religion: in short with all the material and spiritual culture of humanity as such.

The inference I draw from Horkheimer's assertion above is in an attempt to seek resolutions the greatest need is to gain certainty about the nature of reality of the discourses subject. To get there I started by exploring Freire's (1985) narrative in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* along Horkheimer who also explain the unequal power relations. The narrative deliberates on the conflict between the oppressors and the oppressed, and how the conflict can be overcome. The aim is to illustrate that the attainment of liberation is a process that can ideally be realised if the oppressor and oppressed can get to a place where they both realise that their destinies, both the oppressor and the oppressed, have made them subdued in that each seems to believe that their actions should be projected in a particular way.

In his explanation of the oppressor–oppressed relationship, Freire (1985) begins by contrasting the relationship between landowners and peasants to explain the dynamics within the notion of critical pedagogy. Freire's landowners are the dominant members of the society and the peasants are in servitude. The peasants have fully internalised their position, which means they have given up the control of their own lives to follow the dictates of the landowners. In Freire's outlook the peasants' position may never change as long as they believe they are destined to be under the command of the landowners. Freire's revolutionary problem-solving model was developed from the observation of these injustices. In the problem-solving model, the 'oppressed' are taught to read and write, as Freire envisaged this would help them to become conscious of social inequities, which would then conscientise them to also empower others who are in the same position, to improve their circumstance by fighting for their liberation.

My extrapolation of the Freirean philosophy from this narrative is the notion that critical pedagogy and critical theory connects the value of realisation, conscientisation and collectivism, to the emancipation of societies against various forms of social oppression (Freire, 1985:41). It also imparts critical awareness of social struggles surrounding [wo]men, and how to navigate and resist the struggles. McLaren (2003:69) substantiates this contention through his explanation of asymmetrical power relations and social contradictions that are identified through critical pedagogy. To explain this asymmetry McLaren begins by illustrating the contradictions in power relations with the underpinning that "men and women are essentially unfree and inhabit a world rife with contradictions and asymmetries of power and privilege". McLaren (2003:70) further explains the dialectic nature of critical pedagogy, which to an extent enables education

researchers to distinguish paradoxes that exist within the realm of school. The rationalisation is that school can be used as a platform for “indoctrination or socialization [*sic*] or site of instruction (McLaren 2003:70). From these contradictions McLaren states that there is an implication that new resolutions can be achieved, which should be tied to qualitatively better life for all through the construction of a society based on non-exploitative relations and social justice (McLaren 2003:71).

When I use the materialist outlook as lenses to look at HE challenges in South Africa, My contention is the present challenges in HE relate to the current democratic government being the ‘hosts’ of the domineering ideologies, some having been inherited from apartheid practices, and others coming with socio-economic approaches, such as Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), a macroeconomic strategy adopted by South Africa in 1996. Considering that South Africa had just become a democracy at the time, embracing neoliberal strategies at such early stages of the democracy of the country, was detrimental for the country as asymmetrical power relations continued to marginalise the historically disadvantaged groups instead of elevating their participation in all polities, which would trickle down to education. The approach taken by the South African government to embrace capitalism, although there was a large group of people with insufficient capital to participate on an equal footing was negative, and may be one of the reasons for the imbalances that still exist.

At the time, South Africa still needed consequential utilitarianism to recompense those who were previously deprived of opportunities to improve their livelihoods by the apartheid government. Before the historically disadvantaged could taste the opportunities that were presented, the government chose to take the neoliberal approach to inform their policies, and this also trickled into the education sector at large. The infrastructure of poor schools remained unchanged. Instead of making these schools a priority, the government’s focus became fiscal health; hence, there is still a large pool of poor schooling encounters in black communities. To make matters worse, the recruitment methods that most universities opted for, seemed to overlook the unevenness in schooling encounters, which is as perennial as the exclusion of poor students. This impact is burdensome for students from poor schools, as it deprives them of upward mobility, which might in the end help them to improve their circumstances. That the HE institutions tend to be affiliated to global competitiveness makes things worse, because it makes the universities

shy away from the recruitment of students who lack capital that can assist the universities to gain the aspired global recognition. This practice has all the influence to maintain a systematic repression of students from poor schools to the advantage of students from affluent schools.

Secondly, in relation to McLaren view the dialectic lens in critical theory is a necessary tool for policymakers within the institutions in my study, which could be used to conscientise policymakers about the vision for justice and equality that is the theme for both White Paper 3 and WPPSET, which has been lost, because of the aspirations of universities for global prowess. If policymakers at universities were conscientious, they would be able to change continuing asymmetrical power relations in the present HE climate. I am motivated to reason that the decision-makers of the universities, namely the faculty members, administrators and alumni (Christensen & Eyring, 2011), are in the position to encourage the policymakers to change the status quo, because the alumni may be the financial benefactors of the institutions, while the faculty members and administrators have an overview of the imbalances at the institutions. The decision-makers need also to reach a conscious realisation of the need to transform their universities, and willingness to influence policymakers. I will discuss this further in Chapter 4, to explain the competitiveness between universities, and its effect on poor students.

Additionally, using McLaren's (2003) point of view I contend that in the quest to transform repressive structures in HE, policymakers may be able to scrutinise and diffuse the dynamics surrounding power and knowledge, class and culture in society, as these tend to be embedded in societal values, and may be construed as passable norms. For these reasons McLaren (2003:72) argues that critical pedagogy educators should not stop asking questions about why and how knowledge is constructed the way it is. The how and why as some construction of reality are legitimate and celebrated by the dominant cultures, and clearly not by others. This therefore suggests that the existing imbalances in higher education in South Africa should not be left as they are, as chances are that they will eventually be passed as norms. Decolonisation of these partial predispositions is a necessity.

Furthermore, the subtle subjugating undertones in higher education also need major adjustment for coherence to be realised, which could lead to university systems beginning to engender social justice. Greene (1986) corroborates this notion, and states that because HE has been affected by

contradictions and pressures such as globalisation, bridging the gap between the privileged and poor students needs to be a priority, because if we do not attempt to understand the socio-economic dynamics, there is a likelihood that subordinate classes would remain dominated by the dominating class and culture. Greene (1986:429) also mentions that there is a need for an era-appropriate pedagogy, which would be able to free individuals from mental domination, provides human freedom and human growth in these ‘uncritical times’.

In light of the perspectives above, the components of critical theory show neoliberal ideologies as having taken the lead in distressing the university system. There seems to be similarities between Freire’s peasants and students from poor schools. Symbolically, the students from poor schools are the oppressed, and the policymakers at the universities are the oppressors as they are progressively pushing poor students out of the university system through their antagonistic policy structures to make way for students with capital for global competitiveness. Considering that South Africa has had a history of partiality, one would want to believe that policymakers at the institutions in my study would at least develop impartial policies to accommodate students from poor schools, as poor schools are not self-made, but were contrived to keep black students with unremarkable encounters. According to Freire, in the liberation of the students as well as themselves, policymakers ought to develop policies that transform oppressive ideologies instead of upholding them. Freire (1985:25) says:

Liberation is thus a childbirth, and a painful one. The man or woman who emerges is a new person, viable only as the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is superseded by the humanization of all people. Or to put it another way, the solution of this contradiction is born in the labor [*sic*] which brings into the world this new being: no longer oppressor nor longer oppressed, but human in the process of achieving freedom. This solution cannot be achieved in idealistic terms. In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation, which they can transform. This perception is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for liberation; it must become the motivating force for liberating action. Nor does the discovery by the oppressed that they exist in dialectical relationship to the oppressor, as his antithesis— that without them the oppressor could not exist —in itself constitute liberation. The oppressed can overcome the contradiction in which they are caught only when this perception enlists them in the struggle to free themselves.

My intention with this chapter has been to determine theoretical perspectives to employ as lenses for Chapter 5 where I examined artefacts that have reinforced the idea behind the quest to establish a paradigm that could improve the status quo. My deliberations in this presentation include a discussion of how the vision for justice and equality can be purposefully realised, as opposed to having involuntary developments permeating HE structures. Examples of involuntary developments are those that were influenced by #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall protest actions, and like the former President Jacob Zuma's free HE undertaking that have left HE systems vulnerable to mission creep. Christensen and Eyring (2011:vii) associate mission creep to gradual changes, and sometimes cogent changes, in the objectives of an organisation, resulting in the mission expanding beyond its original goals, or changing shape altogether. An example of this is the announcement of free education on 16 December 2017 that I have mentioned above in the subsection 2.1, which is somewhat logical, but the timing of the announcement left many universities vulnerable since they were expected to implement this new programme without fail and timeously, which is or was a tall order, since only NSFAS is the contributor to the perceived 'free' higher education, and that it surely would be difficult to ensure that all students are satisfied. My contention is public universities ought to disrupt their processes of their own accord, because if they do not, their missions might be altered through protest actions, which may force the favoured 'affluent' students opting for private institutions where there will not be interruptions. Then the institutions may eventually be left only with those students they were previously excluding. Granted, nearly all four institutions in my study have attempted to disrupt their processes by creating paths for black students, but in many instances the paths created tend to favour the students who do not need much help, since many went to private or Model C schools. Those who really need help fail to meet the overt and covert selection conditions, and often end up pursuing TVET career paths.

The next subsection focuses on Christensen and Eyring's theory of disruption as a frame of reference for the disruption of perpetual imbalances.

2.3 Towards an understanding of disruption in higher education according Christensen and Eyring's perspective

Christensen and Eyring (2011) outline the theory of disruption in two forms: sustaining innovation and disruptive innovation. Sustaining innovation refers to an organisation or company improving existing programmes or products to become bigger and better than they were, since in this model the programmes or products are regarded as central to the success of the organisation. Disruptive innovation, on the other hand, is normally triggered by demand for the same product, but by customers who are often found at the bottom of the market who may want the same thing, but cannot afford it. In essence, the customers at the bottom end of the market would not mind if the product is simplified. In education however, Christensen and Eyring (2011:101) argue that the disruptive innovation model can be implemented easily and effectively if it is new institutions that embark upon innovation.

Christensen and Eyring further explain that with established institutions, disruptive innovation is often difficult, as established institutions would have spent a number of years making their systems sustainable. This suggests that established universities often opt for sustaining innovation, to improve on existing systems. Christensen and Eyring appositely mention that even established institutions could benefit from disruptive innovation, as this form of disruption can function as lenses to analyse both threats and opportunities in universities, especially if institutions want to embark on new developments. In the case of my study, this would mean the well-established universities, mostly the historically advantaged institutions, looking at opportunities to engender social justice, or systems that tend to prevent the university develop programmes for transformation that are geared towards engendering social justice.

Additionally, Christensen and Eyring (2011) explain that before innovating, self-awareness and understanding of the history of the university should inform policymaking. This suggests that the universities should not aim to resemble well-known, and well-heeled universities (such as Harvard) in terms of programmes, and structure, as their capacities in relation to resources and possibly the university decision-makers (the faculty members, administrators and alumni) are asymmetrical. Christensen and Eyring say institutions should aim to establish great schools with their own merits. For South African HE, this would suggest developing strategies that transcend

imitation and go for innovation. Christensen's disruption theory suggests that institutions in my study should be guided by what they aim to achieve, which at the present moment in South Africa should be to engender social justice, since this is what the White Papers for HE advocate, and what the country needs in order to empower all, notwithstanding their socio-economic statuses.

To progress with Christensen and Eyring's theory of disruption, I then looked at what they deem advantageous and disadvantageous.

2.3.1 Benefits of innovative disruption

As much as Christensen and Eyring's (2011:136) contention is that HE institutions do not often innovate, since their study programmes are standardised, the two scholars however remark that there is a room for new institutions to innovate as they are not bound by their past to remain with certain programmes, while ascribing to the same past processes when granting access to new students. Christensen and Eyring also suggest that even though established universities are products of their past, on top of having similar traits, since most tend to emulate institutions such as Harvard, they also may benefit from innovative disruption if they were to understand that even Harvard evolved over time, from a small face to face non-specialised institution driven by religious dogma, to highly specialised liberal education centre, which does not depend on student tuition and state support, but on private fundraising, and what Harvard created was the dreams of the founding fathers'. Christensen and Eyring then comment that despite the above observation, one of the biggest advantages of disruption processes would be empowered decision-makers. Their assumption is that an empowered university decision-making body can detect and ward-off threats by planning ahead for approaching challenges. As an example, the decision-makers at Harvard were responsible for the university re-inventing itself, while ensuring that the university does not only depend on student fees.

If one uses Christensen and Eyring's argument above to assess the transformation effect in South African HE, it can be argued that the South African HE institutions tend to lean towards the sustaining model of disruption, as the majority of the South African institutions want to be measured against the best institutions in the world. This suggests that the adoption of global traits may improve the university rankings; hence, the apparent advancement of TVETs, even by the

state, so that the university system can sustain the elite approach. This also suggests that if HE institutions opt for keeping their institutions elite, the majority of students from poor schools will forever end up attending colleges, because they lack capital required for getting into HE. I have, however, also indicated that the students from poor schools are likely not to graduate from TVETs either, as I have indicated that it has been confirmed that their throughput is not ideal. Considering that South Africa has had a discriminatory past, when institutions choose the sustaining innovation model of disruption, this action can be understood as a need to sustain social inequity in the university system. This then may to an extent have an unintended aftermath, such as the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall protest actions of 2015–2017 we do not wish to see.

To escape these manifestations, Christensen and Eyring argue that it is important that the university policymakers think along the lines of innovative disruption, which can fast track transformation. To prevent unnecessary challenges, Christensen and Eyring tell the story of how Harvard improved upon its racial diversity. Christensen and Eyring (2011:173) say that Harvard took a conscious decision to affirm minorities, but they did not work on a quota system. The institution opened opportunities for the previously marginalised, and this act disrupted gender biases and racial biases at Harvard, which is nearly what the South African HE system needs. What I understand from this process, is that after the dawn of democracy, South Africa needed to start on a new page, instead of creating a hybrid of nearly all ‘new’ processes, as this may have influenced the delay in transformation.

2.3.2 Challenges in disruptive innovation

The challenges that Christensen and Eyring point out, is up to an extent that policymakers believe disruptive innovation may devalue the exquisiteness of an institution, especially if institutions are to accommodate students that do not possess the capacity that is required to sustain the status of the universities. Christensen and Eyring also allude to the challenge of resources that are needed to empower students who do not have the required proficiencies, which can result in the institutions changing their original shape, and losing part of its decision-makers in the form of the alumni, who also may want to sustain prestige.

When looking at the contemporary dilemma in the HE system in South Africa, such as the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall debacles, and the findings of my master's thesis (Ngwenya, 2014:79) in which I refer to "the notion of excellence" being one of the oppressive referential symbols, alongside Christensen and Eyring's concept of sustaining and disruptive innovation, I contend that the perennial challenges that exist within the HE system may be attached to the HE institutions wanting to sustain inimitability. Upholding social exclusion through the notion of excellence, suggests a disregard for post-apartheid essentials. To restore the destruction of the spirit of goodness that came with the dawn of democracy, university policymakers should endeavour to disrupt the symbols of the past that make it difficult for transformation to take place.

Below, I introduce Noddings' (2013), Held's (2006), and Slote's (2007) ethics of care approach, hooks' democratic education and Young's social connection, which I used to explore the opportunities for disruption that these scholars bring with their perspectives. I have placed critical theorists alongside the care theorist as the critical theory has a potential to be developed into a caring approach.

2.4 The conceptions of an ethics of care

Noddings, one of the feminist originators of an ethics of care, defines ethical caring as a derivative of ontological relations such as family setting relations, where a mother would care for a child. Noddings (2003) explains that a caring process is asymmetrical but reciprocal, as it consists of a carer, and the one who is cared for. The asymmetry depicts determinative positions of influence, and an example of reciprocity can be illustrated through the reaction that the mother may get from a child for whom she cares, which may be endearing and satisfying.

To interpret this type of relationship in an institutional setting, I contend that such relations can, and do, take place at institutions of learning, and they simulate family setting relationships, since the scholarship part of institutions of learning consists of lecturers that facilitate learning, and students that need coaching till they attain their qualifications. Taking from my experience as a student as well, although an adult learner, I would say my lecturers stimulated my learning and encouraged me when I seemed to struggle. The reciprocity was then demonstrated through the level of understanding of concepts I presented after our interaction. When I performed well, the

lecturers were satisfied. This therefore meant the lecturers imparted knowledge, and in return I demonstrated what I have learnt, which was satisfying for them.

Just the same, before students get to meet lecturers they go through administrative processes such as applying for admission, bursaries applications, and other administrative challenges (bureaucratic side of university) that the students have to conquer. It is from this relational notion that Noddings' (2013:xiv) ethics of care argument stems. Noddings' ethics of care challenges any obstructs formed against caring relations to take place. She argues that through an ethics of care, scholars may be able to challenge and transform conditions that make caring difficult or impossible. Essentially, according to Noddings, disrupting university policies and procedures to show altruism and benevolence is possible, but only if policymakers are open to change. The policies and procedures can be made to carry an emotional, and motivational consciousness. This notion carries a similar sentiment as Freire's critical pedagogy, where he explained a need for both the oppressor and the oppressed to realign their mind-sets, so that they could improve on their relationship for the betterment of humankind. Slote (2007:12) concurs and explains Noddings' (2003) view, by stating that when caring drives processes, it displaces ordinary self-interest, and replaces it with unselfish concern towards an individual who needs care. The essence of these perceptions is that because of the segregated past of South Africa, an ethics of care approach ought to show humanity and compassion, and this would be ideal to drive processes that intend to engender social justice in HE.

Held's (2006) ethics of care approach, on the other hand, is grounded in Kantian ethics, which denotes the principles of goodwill. The principle of goodwill obliges people always to act out of duty when partaking in actions that involve others. What sets the Kantian ethics and the ethics of care principles apart is that the Kantian ethics only focus on what is just, whereas ethics of care focus on the importance of response. For instance, Held (2006:10) explains, "prospects for human progress and flourishing hinge fundamentally on the care that those needing it receive", and further explains, "an ethics of care stresses the moral force of the responsibility to the needs of the dependent". The central idea therefore lies in the manner in which one responds towards the need of the individuals that need care. This means the response should be equitable to the needs of those who need care. Also, in an ethics of care approach, the contextual details of the dilemma at hand are necessary to drive the process. More importantly, the ethics of care

approach does not take a neutral stance to avoid bias. Instead, it becomes partial in an attempt to promote affinity and community.

Moving from this position (the contextual details, response and being partial in respect of the plight of the black student in my study) I was drawn to look back at the landscape of the universities in my study. I have characterised them as HAIs and the HDIs. This part of information translates to the inequalities that existed in the past, which were characterised by racial inequities in all spheres of South African societal structures, and which still exists, although in some instances at the universities in my study, inequalities seem to exist covertly. Mouton, Louw and Strydom (2013:286) corroborate this claim by stating inequities still exist despite the South African transformation trajectory. Mouton, Louw and Strydom cite income inequality as the source of present day dilemmas in HE, and that income inequality in South Africa is still visible in racial terms, because of the apartheid legacy that left a large proportion of Africans surviving just above the food poverty line, which is about \$1.35 a day. This means that if a large majority of those living just above poverty line did not receive the state social grant, this scenario could be worse. This is also corroborated by a Statistics SA report (Stats SA, 2017) that in 2015 more than 30.4 million South Africans were living in poverty, and that in general, those who are affected are mostly children (aged 17 years and younger), black Africans, females, people from rural areas, those living in the Eastern Cape and Limpopo, and those with little or no education are the main victims in the on-going struggle against poverty. On the basis of these statistics, things have become worse, considering that the South African unemployment rate is at 29.0% compared to 27.5% in 2017 (Stats SA, 2019).

At universities the outlook is rather bleak for students from poor schools, as the system continues to exclude them, and their upward mobility dream can be interpreted as elusive. That the majority of black students come from backgrounds that live just above the poverty line, as I intimated above, influences their exclusion by university systems because they seem to produce scant results from their schooling encounters, and their schooling results influence their NBT, which is often average as their schools do not prepare them for the NBT. What is unjust in the situation, is the HE systems seems to be harsh on poor students, yet they are just victims of their circumstances. The circumstances that have predetermined poor students' lives are not self-made, it is the schools they go to that lack resources, which result in them not preparing the

students enough. These circumstances are the legacy of apartheid, and are likely to continue indefinitely if universities do not disrupt their processes.

Drawing from the #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall campaigns in my attempt to rationalise what I deem a hostile attitude against black students, I refer to Kane (2007), whose quote is drawn from Frantz Fanon's (2004) theory of racialisation, to state that the 2015–2017 campaigns depict class distinction to describe the gap in the economic substructures, and any prevalent social inequality. This therefore suggests that the students were and are still declaring that there is no social justice in their world, and more especially at their universities. On the back of this foundation, therefore, with this study, I explored habits that could be adopted by universities to provide equitable opportunities in HE without conditions.

Held (2006:14) rationalises that the way we think and act can be credited to the network of social relations that have made it possible for us to do so. This assertion seems to suggest that if the students were to be exposed to equitable opportunities with their white counterparts, chances are the students would thrive, and perhaps supersede expectation. For example, the wealth of opportunities experienced largely by white students prior 1994, which a large majority of white students still experience, because they have had an advantage in the past, continues to give white students an unfair advantage over their black counterparts who come from poor schools. For instance, a majority of white students attended well-resourced schools, which were known as former Model C schools, (the best-funded government schools in the apartheid era, and they were partially governed and funded by parents and governing bodies). Examples of such schools include South African College School (SACS) in Cape Town, founded in 1829, and King Edward VII School in Johannesburg, founded in 1902, and which to this day still command that affluent aura. They are also better resourced and have a rigid selection system.

Only a handful of black students have had such experiences since the majority could not, and still cannot afford to attend exclusive schools. A large majority attended schools with limited, if not without, resources at all. Also, in their situation (past and present) white students are still being taught in their home languages, English or Afrikaans, whereas black students get to be assimilated into either English or Afrikaans when they enter universities, since the two languages epitomise the histories of South African HE institutions. The African languages continue to be

seen as inferior and insignificant. To corroborate this claim, I draw from the Open Stellenbosch Movement that led to the Luister video of 2015 (Hegewisch et al. 2015), that told of the plight of black students at SU, from which SU responded by announcing that in 2016 SU was to introduce parallel medium of teaching, meaning that English would also be the language of communication at the university. According to the university, this was to ‘ensure equitable access to learning and teaching opportunities for all students’.

Despite these developments, it does not seem like much has improved regarding black students’ existence at SU as even with the new language policy that is said to promote multilingualism, IsiXhosa has not been elevated to a language of tuition. I have mentioned isiXhosa, as it is the regional language of the Western Cape. Apart from this, the recruitment of black students is slow. For example, only 3 275 black students whose home language forms part of South African black languages, are enrolled at Stellenbosch from a total of 31 765 in 2019 (Statistics: Stellenbosch University Online, 2019) thus suggesting that only 10.3% of black South Africans are enrolled at SU, which is not much considering that black people are a majority in South Africa. Also, one also wonders why black students do not apply in large numbers at SU.

To compound this, I also examined whether the university have structures in place that prevent the elevation of one language over others. The reason I wanted to examine this is that sometime during June 2015, after the Luister documentary, which told about African students’ racial encounters at SU, I had a conversation with a white Afrikaans-speaking student, whom I knew through my work as a bursary administrator at the time. The demographic representation of the student is relevant since the experiences of black and whites students on Luister were said to be different. When I asked him about the medium of instruction in his classes, he mentioned that BSc Molecular Biology is taught in English, because the terminology used in this field is impossible to translate from English to Afrikaans. He then mentioned that what could be a problem for black students is that when Afrikaans-speaking students need clarity over something the whole lecture drifts to Afrikaans, since other students may need clarity too, and since they are a majority in class, Afrikaans can dominate. This results in African students, who are largely regarded as English-speaking, being left out.

Additionally, I also have had two lived experiences, where lecturers encouraged students to speak Afrikaans, since Stellenbosch is an Afrikaans institution, and in the class there were two or three people who are not Afrikaans-speaking individuals. In one incident, when I made the group aware that I was feeling excluded, the lecturer in question said I should be able to understand Afrikaans, since everybody who went through Bantu Education has learnt Afrikaans in our basic education. This was meant as a joke, but it stung, especially since I felt others were meant to feel comfortable. I felt disparaged, and nobody found ‘the joke’ amusing, including the Afrikaans-speaking students. With this encounter I just want to indicate that the perpetrators of the symbolic violence are often not white lecturers only. Black lecturers do it too. In both instances, my disaffecting encounters were with black (coloured) lecturers.

Because of these encounters I felt it necessary to analyse whether the language policy has tenets that intend to promote the principles of an ethics of care to eliminate experienced and/or observed unpleasant racial undertones such as the one discussed above. I also examined how the policy is linked to the broader mission of the university. I wanted to examine whether the language policy is attentive towards the needs of black students by promoting their languages as well, not only if a student is studying African languages. If the policy framework of the university cultivates caring relations that are able to enrich human life, the language policy should embrace all students. Slote (2007:12) fittingly points it out when he states: “care ethics, on the whole, is characterised by a concern, not only for individual welfare but for good relationship”.

In my analysis of Held’s (2006) and Slote’s (2007) perspectives in relation to the aspects caring towards students who suffer symbolic violence such as my experience at SU, I found that they seem to agree enormously upon the subject of an ethics of care being able to promote social justice. For instance, Held points to the need to show affinity in a caring relation. Slote (2007) also contends that caring should not be limited to those you know, if there is a need to help someone in another country, a caring person should be able to mete out care if they can. This therefore places Slote’s (2007) care ethics as virtuous, rather than just a moral theory. Whether Held (2006) sees an ethics of care as a moral theory and Slote (2007) as a virtue, both perspectives allude to attentiveness, responsibility and responsiveness when dealing with issues

of care. The end result, according to Held (2006:17), should be to ensure that the processes designed are objective, as she emphatically states:

Care may thus provide the wider and deeper ethics within which justice should be sought, as when persons in caring relations may sometimes compete and in doing so should treat each other fairly, or at the level of society within caring relations of the thinner kind we can agree to treat each other for limited purposes as if we were the abstract individuals of liberal theory.

Held's (2006) and Slote's (2007) ethics of care embrace a conventional paradigm through which social justice may possibly be attained. However, when I examine their theory further, I wonder if an ethics of care as an innovative disruptive model can be able to dislodge imbalances within the South African HE sector without including the element of justice as a core goal. For instance, when South Africa became a democracy in 1994, the new dispensation articulated its transformation policies to promote equity and redress. White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education of 1997 (DoE, 1997), outlined the framework for change in the areas of equity and redress, governance and funding to overcome fragmentation and inequality of the past in the HE system, and WPPSET followed, also enacted to redress imbalance, as well as expand HE delivery to accommodate skills training. Unfortunately, the HE and training sector is still where it was before 1997 as according to Mouton, Louw and Strydom (2013:286) affording students from poor schools access to HE has been slow, and change in student demographics in historically advantaged institutions is equally slow. They cite this as the source of on-going tensions in HE.

If I look at the above assertion, my contention is to facilitate the ethics of care approach. It is necessary to use a deontological ethics lens to examine whether the principles that measure fairness, equality, and individual rights have been included in the policymaking of the universities. For instance, in every policy document that is issued in South Africa, the supreme law of the Republic, which is endorsed in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, guides the processes that could effect change. From this outlook therefore, my contention is that HE institution policy structures ought to be linked to the Constitution of the Republic. An example of rights that seem to be flouted by the HE sector at large, judging by the protests actions' rhetoric, are Rights 29(1)(b) and 29(2) as found in the Bill of Rights. Sub-section 29(1)(b) stipulates, "[e]veryone has the right to further education, which the state,

through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.” In sub-section 29(2), the Bill of Rights stipulates:

Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives including single medium institutions – taking into account –

- (a) equity;
- (b) practicability; and
- (c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices.

The Ministry of Education issued White Paper 3 and WPPSET, but this has not guaranteed access to HE for black students, since according to Mouton, Louw and Strydom HE institutions still have the autonomy to grant or deny access. Also, considering that black students are still limited to either English or Afrikaans as languages of tuition, the choice of university in the Western Cape seems to be an issue the State has not undertaken, or rather not met. Therefore, the Ministry of Education ought to establish a measure to arbitrate and monitor fair actions and just actions, within the actions taken by universities. Because of this contention I have included hooks’ (2003) democratic education and Young’s (2011) social connection model to seek as an aspect of justice drive that could enhance inclusion processes at the institutions in my study.

2.5 hooks’s Democratic Education

In her *Pedagogy of hope* (2003:25), hooks brings up the problem of white supremacy thinking as an obstacle to democracy. In her book, bell hooks says, “[t]eachers are often among that group most reluctant to acknowledge the extent to which white-supremacist thinking informs every aspect of our culture including the way we learn, and the manner in which we are taught.” My extrapolation of this excerpt is, in the South African democracy trajectory there is a need for self-examination as to whether the South African democracy is inclusive, and not alienating others, and that the South African democracy does not carry baggage from the past where there is a certain group that is elevated over the other. In the context of this study, democracy should translate into a policy framework that provides for the inclusion of black students from poor schools. To accomplish that, hooks mentions progressive thinking, and that it should be an

essential element in policymaking. Author bell hooks (2003:26) says educators should first acknowledge that white supremacist thinking still shapes the contours of every aspect of our culture, including how we learn. The same author then explains that white supremacist thinking is often associated with what we learnt early in our lives. Author bell hooks' (2003) perspective emphasises the acceptance of this form of thinking that it exists in order to improve on it. Therefore, if policymakers accept and understand this frame of thinking, they might consciously start looking at ways to shed the stereotype that inform their thinking.

Author bell hooks (2003:60) further explains that white supremacist thinking is not restricted only to whites. Some black people also affiliate with that mind-set. I can think of numerous scenarios as examples of white supremacist thinking, lived experiences and observed scenarios, but one that struck the chord is associated to the recent student protest actions. For instance, before 2015, black students often protested about the steep study fees. The media (black and white reporters), politicians, academics and others of a similar mind-set often vilified black students, throwing many labels at them, from being ungrateful to being wasteful. But when the chain of events took another turn in 2015, with white students participating in the protest actions, the media remained mum, zooming its focus onto the Ministry of Education. Suddenly, black students did not matter anymore, their resistance became justified, and white students became heroes because they saved the day by protecting black students from police brutality (EarHustle, 411 2015). This incidence corroborates hooks' (2003:27) assertion that black people who talk too much about race are often represented by the racist mind-set as "playing the race card" and white people who also talk about race are often represented as patrons, or superior civilised beings.

I also have been asked about my interest in the subject of my study, and why I chose such a topic since I am already part of the historically advantaged system. It was disheartening that I had to keep explaining myself in that being on the inside does not mean it is easy, and that it does not mean I should forget about those who aspire to attend at one of these 'prestige' institutions. My drive relates to what Held (2006:38) and Slote (2007:13) describe as affinity and greater good. Nevertheless, to clarify my passion, I can only say that I know how difficult it is to enter the historically advantaged university system. I was rejected a number of times until I went to the university to find out why I was left out if I met the set criteria. As surprising as it may seem, the person who gave me an idea to show up, was Mr De Beer, one of the administrators at the

institution. He happened to be a white male. Had he not planted the idea to talk to the Dean, I might have ended up excluded once more. Mr De Beer became empathetic toward my cause, which drove him to do what Slote (2007:11) refers to as showing an ethics of care to every person who needs it.

Mr De Beer's gesture connects with hooks' (2003:46) outlook that reference the need to understand that in a teaching environment biases exist, especially with educational institutions that had been founded on principles of exclusion, and that if policymakers move away from such a premise, the perpetual challenges in education can be dislodged. Author hooks (2003:25) also points out that nearly everyone wants to see racism end, and that while it is a positive aspect of human culture to wish to see the end of racism, but to act like it does not exist is a misconception, and is undemocratic. My extrapolation of hooks' perspective on race and racism is that white supremacy is synonymous with the neo-liberalism concept that drives privatisation of the economy. Most recently we have seen student protests decrying excessive study fees, workers' protests alongside citizens' protest which are an outcry over the effects of globalisation on ordinary South Africans, and which has made university costs expensive, and university selection processes arduous. Emanating from this understanding, I imagine it is important that universities take into account that the colour of poverty in South Africa is still black, and that in policymaking, the institutions ought to at least take note of the approaches that embrace globalisation patterns tend to exclude poor students. Suffice it to say that when institutions opt for innovative disruptive structures, it is essential first to acknowledge the disparities that come in the form of race as this could assist in the accommodation of black students from poor schools. In my analysis of the universities in my study, one of the lenses that I used to examine whether the institutional policies are mindful of race and its disablement towards black students, is the racial optic lens.

2.6 Young's social connection model

Young (2011:95) explains:

To judge a circumstance as unjust implies that we understand it as humanly caused, and entails the claim that something should be done to rectify it. On the other hand when the

injustice is structural there is no clear culprit to blame and therefore no agent clearly liable for rectification.

In a way, she and hooks work from different angles, with hooks suggesting the modification of white supremacist thinking in order to attain social justice at the universities in my study, with Young mentioning that somehow someone should take responsibility for what is iniquitous at universities. Considering that my claim has been that structural injustice is the source of most challenges at universities, Young emphasises acceptance of responsibility that the circumstances that are prevalent, be it racial inequities, or more so the exclusion of black students from poor schools within the historically advantaged system are ‘humanly caused’ although structural. They have been produced and reproduced within institutional rules and accepted as a norm, which becomes difficult to rectify. Young then proposes a social connection model, which can address structural injustice. Young (2011:96) says, “[b]eing responsible in relation to structural injustice means that one has an obligation to join with others who share that responsibility in order to transform structural processes to make their outcomes less unjust.”

To place this in context, I contend that policymakers at universities should at the best of times try to understand that the reasons behind black students not being able to gain access to universities, is that the structural apartheid laws that still seem difficult to shake denied them fair progression to higher education. As example the schools attended by many black students were, and still are, poorly resourced. Also, many black students suffer symbolic violence since they are assimilated into English and Afrikaans cultures at universities. Policymakers ought to accept the responsibility of modifying structural processes that brought about an injustice.

Young (2011:111) goes on to explain that accepting responsibility should not mean fault-finding or guilt-finding, the aim is to redress the structural injustice by “changing the institutions and processes so that their outcomes will become less unjust”. She further explains that a blame language should not be part of this process as it has a power to place people in silos, thus having one group that is seen as wrong doers, and the other victims, and there is a likelihood that a third group can emerge which becomes bystanders. Young suggests a collective approach where people work together towards attaining a solution for the future. In Young’s perspective, addressing structural injustice should not be about finding the actual perpetrators who are

responsible for structural injustice, but accepting responsibility that injustice is experienced, and ensuring that the causes of the injustice are addressed to prevent it from being a perennial problem.

2.7 Conclusion

After explicating the theoretical perspectives in the chapter, I contend that to go beyond critical theory does not mean abandoning it as a concept, but to look to other perspectives that possess features that can address aspects that have become too contemporary. I want to argue that there is still a great need for critical pedagogy in policymaking. For instance, McLaren points out that critical pedagogy offers a foundation to understand political, social and economic inequities. Departing from that understanding in the study, I have used critical pedagogy to comment on the social inequities that exist in HE. Although I already am of the opinion that the institutions in my study need to disrupt their structures through disruptive innovation, the theories of disruption were also used as lenses to examine the university policies, to evaluate what is missing in their policy structures to ensure progressive change. With an ethics of care, I have examined the responsiveness of institutions towards the needs of the students and the country at large, which is if the universities see themselves playing a bigger part than before in the promotion of social justice within the South African society. Finally, I have explored through hooks and Young how the universities have addressed power relations biases in their structures, and how far has the decision-makers of the universities accepted responsibility that structural injustice exists, and how far have they shaped their policies towards ensuring social justice.

In the chapter that follows, I begin to explore the impact of globalisation on the South African HE sector to evaluate the extent of its influence on the HE sector. I also examined if the institutions in my study have been affected in the same way or differently, especially since Mouton et al. (2013) have indicated that income equality seem to be the source of present dilemmas in HE.

Chapter 3

EXPLICATING THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I have endeavoured to explain the impact of globalisation on the HE landscape in South Africa, which seems to have placed the higher education sector at crossroads, as globalisation is pushing for important choices to be made. Whether these choices are good or bad depends upon which critical lens one is using to observe these commercial movements. I have explained some meanings and consequences, which are associated to the notion of globalisation. My focus in this account has been to interpret the callousness of globalisation in relation to the recruitment of poor students, against any advantages globalisation may bring to a developing country such as South Africa. The main objective of my argument is empathetically to articulate the idea that neoliberalism seems to have taken over even the HE domain, and that to survive, South Africa ought to develop policy frameworks that would allow the country to navigate internationalisation on its own terms, instead of allowing the country to become vulnerable to the ‘charm offensive’ of neoliberalism, as this could lead to the control of South Africa over the our educational matters being displaced.

Corroborating this assertion are Edwards and Usher (2008), who argue that globalisation results in and from increased economic integration tend to offer ambivalent results. On one side the national cultures become displaced, and on the other globalisation produces knowledge universalism. The interpretation I place on this assertion is either way there is no win for nation-states; hence, the need that the HE institutions in my study disrupt their policy framework to suit national needs, as this could benefit all students whose ambitions are to gain access to HE, notwithstanding their race or economic status.

In the study, I have also endeavoured to explain how globalisation has managed to weaken the essence of *ubuntu* (humanness and dignity) that reigned within the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) policy framework of the new South Africa, which was enacted in 1995. This resulted in the collapse of many programmes conceptualised to engender social

justice, including those conceptualised to guarantee equity and redress in higher education. For instance, the RDP policy framework was conceptualised to redress structural injustice, which South Africa needed for transitioning from the divisive apartheid system to a democracy. But when South Africa became pressured through neoliberalism norms, the new democratic government replaced RDP with transmutations of western economies. Since the abandonment of RDP, South Africa has since experienced varied economic policies such as GEAR in 1996, followed by ASGISA, as was introduced in 2005. In 2010 the NGP came into being, which has since been replaced by the NDP, which was introduced in 2013. Most recently, on the 27 August 2019, Mr Tito Mboweni, our Finance Minister, released a paper that introduced a new economic strategy, titled *Economic Transformation, Inclusive Growth, and Competitiveness: Towards an Economic Strategy for South Africa*. In essence these ultra-modern macroeconomic policy frameworks have introduced South Africa to the global stage for international trade, but nationally, macroeconomics have neither translated to the employment of the poor masses, nor have they accelerated equity and access programmes in HE. Akoojee and McGrath's (2003:16) assertion support my argument when they state:

[t]he assessment of South Africa's foray into the global arena is mixed since there is evidence of a growing ability to compete in international markets manifest in a better export performance and underpinned by significant growth in productivity. However, output, investment and particularly employment growth have been far from satisfactory.

In my view regarding the HE arena, the #FeesMustFall protest actions that set South Africa ablaze from 2015–2017 confirm the distress felt by the majority of black students, and the protests actions were their way of registering their dissatisfactions. The dissatisfactions have not subsided, and are now becoming common in different spaces.

To substantiate my discernment of globalisation, in the chapter I deliberated on the impact of globalisation on the South African economy, and to some extent I refer mostly to GEAR, since this policy framework paved the way for the neoliberal thinking in South Africa after the democratic elections of 1994. After that I wrote about the extent to which globalisation and the economy has affected the South African HE sector. Lastly, I summarised the globalisation pressures on HE, and the effect of these pressures on the HE institutions in my study in different ways. I have also introduced some features of the concept of *ubuntu* to reemphasise the need for

innovative disruption within the historically advantaged institutions if these institutions are to transform structural injustice completely.

My argument begins from my socialisation regarding the concept of *ubuntu*, to explain the manner by which Africans continued with their lives before globalisation crept into South Africa. As much as a doctoral student, I recognise that academic conventions, in terms of validating an assertion, require that I draw from published scholars to corroborate or expound on a claim, in this case I want first to draw from my lived experiences to explain how I was socialised to understand the concept of *ubuntu*, and then refer to Dr Johann Broodryk's (2006) *Ubuntu African life coping skills: Theory and practice*.

My understanding of *ubuntu* begins with the explanation that it is unfortunate that in South Africa today the notion of *ubuntu* is ever so often referred to when people want to make a point, or disprove a point. And it is equally unfortunate that individuals tend to create an impression that *ubuntu* began in 1994, when the notion of *ubuntu* is supposed to be part of our everyday life as a human race. *Ubuntu* is an act of kindness that my siblings and I grew up witnessing. We witnessed our parents being parents to all children in our neighbourhood. We witnessed our neighbours parenting us when our parents were not there. We witnessed weddings in our neighbourhood attended by people from near and far, some known and others unknown, and that was not strange. We witnessed strangers visiting our household during lunchtime or dinnertime, with our parents offering a meal to them too. And that is something that was proudly passed on to us, and we passed it on to our children. We are or were not unique. Nearly every black child I know grew up with a similar understanding. On the other hand, when someone is said to lack *ubuntu*, it may only mean his or her actions have gone beyond what is known to humans as conventional. Such a person would by then be walking in the world known only to those on all fours (animals) or only known to himself or herself.

With this comment, I merely want to explain that in black communities *ubuntu* is not taught, it is an established pattern of behaviour that reinforces homogeneity within a community. Homogeneity translates into looking after each other with deference and compassion. Within the concept of *ubuntu* there is no othering, thus referring to some form of dualistic oppositions of us and them but constancy that builds a sense of belonging.

Camilleri and Malweska-Peyre (1997:43) validate this assertion by pointing out that concepts that relate to the relationship between individuals and their social environment encourage the individual to internalise whatever allows them to identify with a particular society, which is customarily defined as part of the society's culture. From this context therefore, I argue that *ubuntu* symbolises the spirit of togetherness that relays a message that each of us is responsible for the other. A corresponding concept found in Young (2011:104) is referred to as a social connection model of responsibility. In Young (2011:96), this notion shows agents taking responsibility for injustices that perpetuated institutional discrimination, and carrying out activities in a morally appropriate way and seeing to it that certain outcomes to transform the status quo are obtained. From the context of the social connection model it can be inferred that to make the universities in my study accessible to all, access policies would reject structural injustice, and start embracing the spirit of *ubuntu*, especially since some of the institutions in my study somewhat “contributed by their actions (external and internal exclusion of black students) to structural processes that brought about some unjust outcomes” (Young, 2011:96). Broodryk (2006:6) refers to the espousal of *ubuntu* as an illustration of comradeship that places its emphasis on social and physical interdependence of people. Broodryk (2006:7) also explains that there is no self-reliance in the notion of *ubuntu*, individuals rejoice in collective co-existence, which in a way ties into my contention that if the notion of *ubuntu* can be introduced to HE as an auxiliary system, to assist mostly those students that are likely to be rejected by the present systems which embrace neoliberal thinking, mostly at the HE institutions in my study, the university processes could be able to engender social justice.

It is quite unfortunate that since globalisation has gained momentum in South Africa, the interdependence of people has become adulterated by the normalisation of competition. In an ideal world, where individuals have equitable abilities, some form of competition might never be a challenge, but in the South African case, it is unreasonable for institutions to expect all students to possess capital that can support the desires of the universities to compete with global institutions when some of the students come from poor schools with marginal resources. Ramose (2003, cited in Coetzee & Roux, 2003:543), supports this assertion and comments that since economic globalisation in the form of free markets emerged, ethics is relegated systematically to the background on the plea that the laws of economics are purely objective. In my view, this reasoning from my observation of #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall protests, as well as other

protests that have plagued South Africa up to the present time, which include the xenophobic attitudes we have recently witnessed, there is no objectivity in the laws of economics as the more the South African economic policies are influenced by political globalisation contours, the more the knock on effect becomes harmful. An example of this is the unemployment rate that has risen to 29% in the second half of 2019 (Staff Writer: Business Tech Online, 2019). The unemployment rate influences all aspects of South African life. For example, in the HE space, students have in different protests showed their disgruntlement towards higher fees, and in recent years their rhetoric has accentuated dissatisfaction with “white privilege” (Kane, 2007:357). I have outlined the concept of white privilege in Chapter 2 as an uproar that symbolises disparities and social inequality in the economic substructures, which in apartheid South Africa were perpetuated through hegemony. In the context of the South African HE sector, ‘white privilege’ could suggest the perpetuation of othering, which still exists although South Africa is a democracy. Presently othering seems to be perpetuated by globalised (internationalised) policies. One of the tenets of globalisation is competition, which can never be realistic in South Africa, because the majority of the South African population lacks some of the proficiencies required to fit in with globalisation. This also tends to immortalise racism, for which the students seek responsiveness from the custodians of their institutions and the Ministry of Higher Education and Training.

On this basis, this chapter highlights not only the effect of globalisation on the economy, it also includes the effect of globalisation on communal habitus, thus illustrating how globalisation has manage to displace *ubuntu*, the social thread that has an ability to bind the community together. Held (2006:10) explains compassion as another thread that could bind the community together. Compassion is also referred to as an ethics of care. Held (2006:10) explains that in situations such as the HE institutions that seem to continue to exclude students, an ethics of care ought to be adopted as a process to drive the practices of the universities, because an ethics of care could be able to address the entrenched biases in South Africa in the social and historical context (Held, 2006:46). Broodryk (2006:2) also suggests the use of *ubuntu* in programmes that relate to diversity, because “[u]buntu is an ancient African worldview based on the primary values of intense humanness, caring, sharing, respect, compassion and associated values, ensuring a happy and qualitative human community life in the spirit of family.” In Chapter 2, I have advanced innovative disruption as a paradigm that could be apt to assuage the exclusion of black students

from poor schools in HE. An innovative model that I consider would also manage to navigate pressures of globalisation ought to include an ethics of care, a social connection model of responsibility, and the practice of *ubuntu*, as these notions have an ability to engender social justice. I have sought the ideas that support my proposition from:

- Habermas' (2005) *Inclusion of the other: Studies in political theory*;
- Ball's (2001) "Global policies and vernacular politics in education";
- Akoojee and McGrath's (2003) *Globalisation and education and training in South Africa: On being GEAR(ed)!*;
- Altbach's (2004) "Globalisation and the university: Myths and realities in an unequal world";
- Edwards and Usher's (2008) *Globalisation and pedagogy: Space, place and identity*; and
- Broodryk's (2006) "Ubuntu African life coping skills: Theory and practice".

In the first part of the chapter, I explored the definitions of Habermas (2005), UNESCO (2010), and Collins and Ball (2001) to surmise my personal characterisation of globalisation. Next, I discussed the impact of globalisation on the South African economy. In my discourse, I refer to the economic policy of GEAR further, since it is the one macroeconomic policy framework that initiated change in the South African way of life for the free market system. In my discourse, I constantly draw on the ethics of care and theory of disruption lenses to evaluate change.

I have deliberated on the ethics of care principles in Chapter 2, where I reported on my theoretical framework for the study, and surmised that the ethics of care principles are fundamental when examining the responsiveness of an organisation towards the needs of those needing care (Held, 2006:12). In this chapter, the ethics of care principle is used as a lens to examine the processes behind the implementation of the key economic policies in South Africa, whether they were designed to be responsive to the needs of the black majority who had at the time been recently emancipated from the subjugating laws of apartheid, or to move ahead with times, as internationalisation had befallen all countries of the world. The objective is to identify why transformation has taken such a slow pace in HE. The contention that transformation is slow, arises from the observation of the continuous exclusion of the black students from poor schools from gaining HE encounters. It is not that I am saying poor students do not get into higher education at all, it is just that those who manage to gain access seem to be found by large

numbers in the programmes that have the reachable FPS, such as the arts and the social sciences, or programmes that either an institution wants to start. For example, as a bursary fund administrator I once had an encounter with students who were registered for a national certificate in dental assisting at CPUT. When I asked why would they choose to do dental assisting, when UWC was right next door and there they could register for a Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BChD), especially since the students had both attained bachelor's degree pass requirements, the students told me that the course was not their choice. But when they got to CPUT, they wanted to be in the engineering programme, and it turned out the programme was by then full, and so at administration they were told to take dental assisting and change it the following year. Maybe this was true, or since this was the first year of the said course, the administration department wanted to recruit for the course. Considering that the majority of these students come from poverty, why would they even want to waste even a single year in a course they would drop? One also wonders about the personnel at HE, and whether they really understand the plight of the students they serve. This is explored further in Chapter 5, where an analysis of the policies of the universities is conducted.

In this chapter, the objective is to discuss the effect of globalisation on the South African socio-political and socio-economical areas as indicated earlier. I discuss how this has affected the HE sector, while looking at ways to navigate this inescapable dilemma. The dilemma that has manifested itself in having HE institutions going for selective admissions processes, which is a practise that tends to exclude students from poor schools from gaining access to HE. Below, I start with the definition of globalisation.

3.2 Globalisation

Globalisation as a concept seems to carry numerous definitions, which mostly come to the conclusion that the process refers to the domineering movements of trade and people on one side, and on the other hand, an expansive phenomenon which encourages a free flow of capital, goods and services to lope across nations to the 'benefit' of all nations. The definitions conferred upon globalisation somewhat makes the process seem paradoxical, in that it seem empowering to some nations, while it is largely disempowering to others. Habermas (2005:120) gets his definition from Giddens (1984). Habermas says globalisation is the intensification of worldwide relations

resulting in reciprocal interconnections between local happenings and distant events. In a way, Harbemas' definition corroborates my understanding of the concept that the globalised movements consist of the flow of trade and capital. Habermas (2005:121) goes further to explain that globalisation is synonymous with capitalism. His definition also explains that globalisation tends to force nation states to abandon consequential utilitarianism in their fiscal policymaking, and replace it with a free market system ideology for probable economic growth. Habermas (2005) also explains that, as inviting as the free market system seems, policymakers should be aware that its disadvantages outweigh its advantages. Habermas (2005:122) then refers to the loss of the independence of nation states as one of the disadvantages of globalisation. He argues that nation states are gradually becoming supranational, because of the transnational economic processes. An example of a supranational union that Habermas (2005:155) mentions is the European Union (EU). The EU is characterised by the 28-member state political alliance (until British exit (Brexit) is finalised), which Habermas (2005:158) refers to as an advantage of globalisation. He says EU brokering of its economic activities as a group, is a benefit since the union is likely to catch up with the forces of a globalised economy. The supranational union enjoys liberal economic and social cohesion, which allows them flexibility to approach international trade as an intergovernmental organ, resulting in the economic flow being comfortable, because of the alliance treaties. Habermas (2005:161) concludes by mentioning that there is a potential for sovereign states to benefit from globalisation. He says they, however, would need to tailor their policies in a manner that allows them to manoeuvre the globalised economic systems on their own terms.

The UNESCO (2010) definition of globalisation, in *Teaching and learning for a sustainable future: a multimedia teacher education programme* carries a similar definition to Habermas' (2005) description of the concept. In the UNESCO (2010) view, globalisation as an on-going process that has cut into national and international boundaries, and made the world small by linking its people, neighbourhoods, cities, regions and countries much more closely together than they have ever been before. The financial markets, technology and cultural exchange through human movements are said to have engendered the interconnection channels. Although the advantages and disadvantages of globalisation have not been explicitly pointed out, it has; however, been implied that globalisation has its desirables and failures, a sentiment corroborated by Collins (2015) in his *Pros and Cons of Globalization* article. Collins says:

A story in the Washington Post said “20 years ago globalization was pitched as a strategy that would raise all boats in poor and rich countries alike. In the U.S. and Europe consumers would have their pick of inexpensive items made by people thousands of miles away whose pay was much lower than theirs. And in time trade barriers would drop to support even more multinationals expansion and economic gains while geo political cooperation would flourish.

While Collins (2015) mentions that the globalisation system seems to have been good for many developing countries that have since accessed European or American markets, and who can now export their goods, Collins (2015) however remarks that globalisation has had a heavy socio-economic effect on the working class. He says one of globalisation’s features is to contain government expenditure and promote private ownership; hence, the heavy impact on the poor masses. In his extrapolation of globalisation, Collins concedes that globalisation is a complicated notion, which is hard to define. He then suggests an evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses before drawing any conclusions. Ball’s (2001) characterisation of globalisation below offers a depiction of the advantages and disadvantages of globalisation.

Ball’s (2001:xxx) account of globalisation begins with an oxymoron. He first corroborates the idea that globalisation has made the world smaller, and then rationalises that the political, economic, cultural and social interchanges that epitomise the globalisation phenomenon are invasive towards local settings. Ball then conversely says although these social, political and economic transactions can be disruptive to the policymaking of nation states, he however does not view them as destructive to the local setting, especially if the fiscal policies of nation states are planned to become flexible towards globalisation. He also mentions that in policymaking, nation states should, in retrospect, be accommodative to their local programmes as well as to advance internal developments, which will safeguard their sovereignty from being submerged by the forces of globalisation. Ball (2001:xxx) however states that if, by any chance, globalisation were to permeate a local setting, the worst that could happen would be the creation of a new form of local cultural identity. Ironically, there is uniformity in the new identities that emerge across nations as they share the same neoliberal ideas. Nevertheless, Ball’s (2001:xxxviii) emphasis is that globalisation is gradually creating a new kind of world citizenship, which is more technologically savvy and entrepreneurial. Finally, Ball mentions that the economies of

nation states can benefit if policymaking can be innovative, and start developing policies that understand global interdependence.

My extrapolation of globalisation therefore established from the three perspectives above, is that globalisation is a double-edged sword, since it presents a mixture of threats and opportunities. On the one side, globalisation creates a space for nation states to develop their economies, especially if their policies allow them flexibility to trade with other countries. On the other hand, globalisation can consume the way of life of nation states if their policymaking does not allow for agility and resilience towards globalisation.

Additionally, looking at the state of affairs in South Africa, I am reluctant to predict progressive developments for a developing nation state such as South Africa within globalisation, because countries such as South Africa do not enjoy a symbiotic relationship with most countries that form part of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in that developing nation states are mostly recipients of transferred philosophies, and also consumers of imported commodities. This can be argued from the perspective that the South African democracy is still young, contrary to popular belief that 25 years is a long time, and the fact that developing countries are not as affluent and developed as their OECD counterparts. For instance, South Africa comes from a long economic hiatus during the apartheid era. During that period South Africa incurred debt more than it made gains. For developing countries to participate in globalisation seems skewed, although a neoliberal consensus dictates that they do participate, even if they are disproportionately placed. To support my assertion, I draw on Akoojee and McGrath (2003:6) where the two scholars explain how global change dealt South Africa an unfair setback, since globalisation presented itself alongside the transition of South Africa from the subjugation of the apartheid government to a democracy. This on its own testifies to the skewedness of South African participation in globalisation, in that South Africa had to juggle redressing imbalances of the past, while it also had to create policies that would allow the country participation in globalisation. Globalisation led into the abandonment of RDP programmes, which were meant for the improvement of black people's lives since apartheid deprived them of their basic human rights. Akoojee and McGrath (2003:7) state that South Africa abandoned RDP in 1996 for the macroeconomic planning strategy GEAR perhaps to survive the new age of interdependence. Akoojee and McGrath also state that it is unfortunate

that GEAR did not translate into an increase in employment. GEAR translated into the reduction of welfare spending by the government, in favour of trade liberalisation to keep up with the EU. This also meant that the livelihood of the majority of black people that the RDP programmes were designed for, were once again destabilised. Despite that, below I will expand in detail on what some scholars say about how the South African economy has been globalised and the effect of it on the country. This will then be followed by my extrapolation of the effect globalisation has had on the South African HE sector.

3.3 The consequence of globalisation on the South African economy

In the 1980s while South Africa was still under the National Party (NP) apartheid reign, South Africa's trading partners, such as United States of America (USA), the European Community (EC) and Japan imposed economic sanctions to pressure the South African government to end apartheid. During that period South Africa experienced economic difficulty and this also meant the country relied heavily on a government spending deficit, which would be deemed an improbable practice in neoliberal times, since it would mean the rejection of free market systems. Nevertheless, whether the trade and financial sanctions were meted out because of the South African apartheid policies, or because foreign investors wanted to protect their investments from continuous unrest in the country, does not matter anymore as the subjugation laws were repealed. What is crucial presently is the background of how things were before 1994 in order to map the way forward, that is to find a paradigm that could allow South Africa to navigate internationalisation, and be able to engender social justice as well.

Before I go into detail, I want to refer to some aspects of Habermas' (2005) definition of a nation state, so as to align my rationale to the definition. First Habermas (2005:107) breaks the definition into two. He says:

The state on the modern conception is a legally defined term, which refers, at the level of substance, to a state power that possesses both internal and external sovereignty, at the spatial level over clearly delimited terrain and at the social level over the totality of its citizens.

Habermas (2005:107) then goes on to mention that the term "nation" has the connotation of a political community shaped by common descent, or at least a common language, culture and

history. Against this clarity, therefore, if apartheid South Africa protected its nationalist agenda, this suggests that the apartheid laws to an extent protected the Afrikaans language, history and culture. Although South Africa is a heterogeneous community, before 1994 Afrikaans had an elevated status because the NP policy framework ensured the survival of the Afrikaans language. The legislation also ensured that English had an equal status to Afrikaans, since both Afrikaans and English were bound by the colonialist history, and the 1902 peace treaty signed after the Anglo-Boer War (South African History Online, 2017b). The reality of the matter is that this promoted 'white privilege', which Kane (2007) explains as a concept of "whiteness" coined by Frantz Fanon (2004 [1961]), generally used as a representation of class distinction, to describe inequality in the economic substructures, and/or any prevalent social inequality. In the apartheid era, one could safely argue, that the concept of whiteness meant only one thing, if one were white, one would be in the superior position in every aspect of social and economic strata, but in the present system that is influenced by globalisation, 'whiteness' is aligned to Fanon's conceptualisation, and can refer to class and social injustices.

In South Africa, like in many other developed and developing countries, the globalisation phenomenon took off in the 1990s. What seems to have been the source of distress for the new South Africa during this

period was that South African freedom was achieved alongside the emergence of globalisation in our country. Prior to the dawn of democracy, black people had been through different forms of subjugation since they were first colonised by the Dutch in 17th century. Black people's oppression became worse after the beginning of the NP rule in 1948. One would presume that the priority for the new government after the 1994 elections would have been to facilitate programmes that would eventually engender social justice, but then the new government also had to be mindful of the free market systems that were affecting the whole world. Therefore South Africa became a country at odds between what would best for the country that was experiencing trade and economic deficits, or continue with their welfare approach through the RDP programmes. It is from the observation of these neo-liberal pressures that I argue that although a number of sacrifices had to be made in order to join the global village, it is however important that South Africa realises that the sacrifices have taken South Africa a few steps back. To this day we are still discussing issues of social justice that have not been realised. The challenges of

the triple threats of South Africa are becoming worse because of globalisation, as South Africans find themselves competing for survival because of global movements. South Africa ought to find ways to navigate globalisation, without having to sacrifice social justice matters.

3.4 South Africa and Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

Shortly after the new democratic government came into power, RDP was introduced as the programme by which the new government planned to address the existing socio-economic challenges at the time. Most important was to address the social and economic inequalities intensified by apartheid legislation. According to The White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development Programme of 1995 (Government Gazette, 1995:9) the RDP programme had five basic principles as its foundation, namely meeting basic needs, developing human resources, building the economy, democratising the state and society, and implementing the RDP.

Meeting basic needs meant ensuring that black South Africans had access to the basics that white South Africans had, such as running water, ablution facilities, energy supply, health care, social welfare and security. Prior to this new policy framework, most black South Africans lived in economically arid rural areas, and those who lived in cities lived in poor housing, mostly without running water. As far education was concerned, with RDP, the new government also indicated its priority to redress the imbalances created by the apartheid laws in education. HE was to be made a priority if South Africa had to develop skilled human resources that would also help rebuild the country. This meant that the historically advantaged institutions, characterised by being racially exclusive, were to start with diversity programmes to ensure social justices for all, regardless of social standing. This would later be expounded upon in the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education. The key objective was to develop a new diversified cohort of students, who would also benefit from various programmes offered at diversified institutions. With the range of skills learnt from these institutions, it was anticipated that the students would later contribute to the reconstruction and development of the country (Department of Education, 1997). Between 2015 and 2017 this seemed difficult to attain; hence, the flood of students' protests such as #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall. Although since 2018, South Africa started to implement free education, the access challenge in HE has not been improved much. As the financial challenge is secondary, the major challenge remains gaining

access into HE as institutions opt for meritocracy, which I have referred to as the denial of disparities in HE. I deliberate on this further in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

At the time, the implementation of the RDP policies was an attempt to employ a welfarist approach to benefit the masses that were previously left out of the economy by the previous laws. Akoojee and McGrath (2003) state that the South African government found itself frustrated by the political realisation that attempts to respond to the global agendas implied sacrificing some key welfarist elements that were necessary for the transformation of black people's lives. Instead, the new government started planning for long-term fiscal health. According to Habermas (2005:108), when a nation state abandons nationalism, it can only mean that the nation state starts opening its economy. Akoojee and McGrath (2003:7) corroborate this assertion and go further to explain that while the new democratic government was still implementing its RDP programmes, the country felt the need to open its economy, as globalisation demands placed pressure on South Africa to acknowledge and respond to international trade happening around them. Soon after that the new democratic government became a signatory to the Marakesh Agreement as part of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (Akoojee & McGrath, 2003:7), which cemented an export tariff reduction. This meant that the GEAR economic policy became a reality. Through GEAR the government had hoped that it would ensure a cut back on government spending while stimulating private sector spending, which was aimed at growing the South African Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and would contain inflation (Akoojee & McGrath, 2003:7).

In 1996 the South African government abandoned RDP, since it did not fit in with the newly adopted strategy. With GEAR it meant less government spending and a lower fiscal deficit. It also meant relaxed exchange control, reduction in tariffs to facilitate industrial restructuring to optimise state resources. Akoojee and McGrath say GEAR was designed to ensure South African competitiveness and insertion onto the global playing field. Akoojee and McGrath (2003:16) further state that for the better part of 1996–1998, the South African GDP improved. They however mention that despite the growth in GDP, inequalities in South Africa seem to have grown, with the poor becoming poorer, although the two scholars acknowledge that there are a few blacks whose livelihoods have improved. Akoojee and McGrath (2003:6) continue to say they do not want to place the blame on GEAR, but contend that some of the present problems in

South Africa may have resulted from the abandonment of the RDP. Their argument is that when a country abandons its welfarist approach for a liberal approach that promotes a free market system, trade and investments increase, and this often improve the country's fiscal austerity, ensuring a low deficit and low inflation. In the case of South Africa, taking the free market approach did not translate into a high employment rate for black South Africans, since a large number of the African population lacked skills that could ensure job security. At the same time, in the education sector, things were equally not improving, as when GEAR kicked in, schools also lost out. In HE, the institutions started to become highly competitive, as they wanted to be measured against the best universities in the world, and this translated into the institutions forgetting about their diversity programmes. This could also suggest there is still a likelihood that a high unemployment rate can become a permanent feature in South Africa as the skilled work force is not produced on time.

The introduction of GEAR did introduce South Africa to international trade, but nationally GEAR collapsed RDP that was rooted in *ubuntu*, and this seems to have sustained the disparities that prevailed in the apartheid era. Akoojee and McGrath (2003:27) say that the poor have become poorer in the current South African milieu. My extrapolation of Akoojee and McGrath's (2003) assertion is that without an ethics of care, only the fit will survive. The difficulty in this situation is the reality that the majority historically disadvantaged individuals are finding it hard to survive, and this has trickled down to HE, which is supposed to skill the youth for the workplace. In the paragraphs that follow, I discuss the effect of a free market on HE.

3.5 The effect of globalisation on HE

Altbach (2004:4) mentions that it is an age-old custom for universities to function as global institutions. Altbach uses the structure of the American institution to explain this assertion. He states that the modern American university structure is influential worldwide, especially that of Harvard, a thought corroborated by Christensen and Eyring (2011:136), who also say that most universities tend to emulate certain traits from Harvard. In the context of this study, based on my experience as a student and on observation, the traits that seem to be emulated are traits such as admissions selectivity, thus focusing on gifted students, comprehensive specialisation, faculty self-governance, fund-raising, and scholarly excellence. Most universities in South Africa have

adopted these traits, especially scholarly excellence, which I have seen at my alma mater, SU. I have referred to this assertion in my master's thesis, (Ngwenya, 2014:64), that the admissions policies at SU lack coherence between national and institutional objectives. This suggests that, although the institution commits to redress, SU continues to uphold meritocracy as the basis of its access policies to maintain high success rates, which can also make the university are better placed in academic rankings.

I have referred to Altbach (2004), and Christensen and Eyring (2011) to acknowledge that tensions between national realities and international trends have existed long before the 20th century globalisation trends emerged in HE. I have also drawn from SU policy documents to point at the South African HE dilemma, which still symbolises the gulf between the historically advantaged and historically disadvantaged students, whilst confronted by globalisation. Christensen and Eyring (2011) go on to state that even the 'Great American University' emerged from international influences, such as the colonial model imported from England. According to Altbach, globalisation is not new to HE, and it is inevitable. What is important, is to learn to navigate around its pressures, a thought also alluded to by Habermas (2005:161) that nation states ought to tailor their policies in a manner that allows them to manoeuvre the globalised economic systems on their own terms.

Even with the considerations presented above, the story of globalisation in HE seems ironic. On the one hand, extrapolating from the assertions above, globalisation in HE seems like a positive issue, and on the other hand globalisation seems an imposition that has placed South Africa at the crossroads. Altbach (2004:4) explains HE as having grown in leaps and bounds since the Medieval Era to the 21st century through international influences. Altbach (2004:11) also refers to the language of instruction having had evolved immensely with globalisation, from Latin and German, to English. Altbach (2004) also paints a picture, that for any HE institution to grow and have an effective existence, it needs to synchronise its growth with other world institutions. Altbach (2004:6) says, "[g]lobalisation cannot be completely avoided. History shows that when universities shut themselves off from economic and societal trends they become moribund and irrelevant."

The irony emerges out of my analysis of the South African circumstances. The effect of globalisation in HE in this regard is distressful, because the historically disadvantaged group seems not to have had a chance to flourish. For instance, during apartheid the majority of black students were excluded from HE as that was a tactic to keep them in servitude. In the present era, the status quo seems not to have changed, as the globalisation-fuelled policies that are employed by universities seem to still exclude the same students. The difference is that the students are now excluded because of their lack of the capital required by universities. Apart from this, South Africa has the burden of its socio-economic challenges that relate to poverty, unemployment and imbalances that are the legacies of apartheid, and therefore globalisation has compounded the South African challenges, as it also has dislocated the processes that were developed to redress those imbalances. Altbach (2004:5) says that HE is mostly affected by globalisation through information technology in its various manifestations, the use of English for scientific communication, massification and societal needs for highly educated personnel. Altbach (2004:6) then states that to cope with, or rather exploit, globalisation impacts, countries ought to develop specific policies that are aligned to other members of the global village. So, in the case of South Africa, any policymaking decisions that are taken, tend to affect South Africans according to racial inequalities, and thus leaving out the same people whose livelihoods the national policies (RDP) were attempting to improve. In this case, therefore, globalisation seems to have become a burden in the South African political space.

While taking Altbach's (2004) assertion into account, my contention is that South Africa adopted GEAR to cope with globalisation pressures, as I have indicated earlier, and that the country abandoned RDP for GEAR to plan for long-term fiscal health. This undertaking reduced welfare spend thus suggests certain programmes were either abandoned or the budget became smaller. The reduction of welfare spend meant less government spend towards redress programmes, and less government spend on HE interventions. HE institutions were left to their own discretion to deal with redress programmes. According to Mouton et al. (2013), this suggests HE institutions could do as they pleased, because the institutions were given the autonomy to run their institutions as they pleased, and technically this continuously lead to the exclusion of students from poor schools who also want HE encounters for upward mobility, but cannot get access since their schooling encounters do not equip them with the capital needed by HE institutions.

Therefore, globalisation is affecting the South African HE sector badly as it stirs inequities, and in South Africa inequities unfortunately become a race issue.

Furthermore, the pressures of massification in HE provoked the same sentiment. For instance, Altbach (2004:6) mentions that massification arrived with globalisation, which led to the opening of HE opportunities for the historically disadvantaged. Because of massification, the South African HE sector went through a process of restructuring. The National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) of 2001 (OECD, 2008) provided the framework and mechanism needed for restructuring, to achieve the vision and goals for the transformation of HE outlined in the Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education. The core goals of restructuring were to expand the scope of universities and specialisation, and provide a framework for funding as a single entity and governance. Suffice it to say that the restructuring of HE from a disjointed apartheid system to a new democratic system has been slow, especially since some historically advantaged institutions still want to maintain their status quo, probably because in recent years they are to contend with world universities, so they do not need the burden of students who are not high achievers. The historically disadvantaged institutions are still poorly funded, as they were in the past. I have mentioned this phenomenon in Chapter 2 in my discourse on funding allocations as presented by De Wet (2019), namely, “universities will receive starkly different levels of support from the government, ranging from nearly R80 000 per student for Rhodes University to just about R37 000 per person at Walter Sisulu University.” In the two paragraphs below, I give a brief background of how the institutions were before and how globalisation has somewhat influence slow transformation processes at the universities under study. I also drew from Akoojee and McGrath (2003) to put things into perspective on why South African HE problems have not changed.

According to Bunting (2010) in “The higher education landscape under apartheid”, HE institutions were designated for the exclusive use of white South Africans. By the beginning of 1985, a total of 19 HE institutions had been designated as being ‘for the exclusive use of whites’, two as being ‘for the exclusive use of coloureds’, two ‘for the exclusive use of Indians’, and six as being ‘for the exclusive use of Africans’. The six institutions for Africans did not include the seven institutions in the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) countries, even though it was expected that the latter would be used almost entirely by the African citizens of the

four ‘independent republics’ (Bunting 2010). In the present reforms, HE institutions have been grouped into three institutional types: eleven traditional public universities, which provide theoretically oriented university degrees, six comprehensive public universities, which provide a combination of theoretically oriented university degrees and vocation oriented degrees, and eight public universities of technology that provide vocationally oriented diplomas and degrees. I have explained this in detail in Chapter 2.

Akoojee and McGrath (2003) comment on the current circumstances, and connect the present inequalities in HE to the restructuring process that was fraught with tensions. On the one hand, the historically advantaged institutions were calling for recognition of efficiency and excellence, whilst on the other hand the historically disadvantaged institutions wanted redress. More than anything, the pervasive complexities are to this day about scholarly excellence against redress. Basically, the South African HE sector is still not coping with massification, which has been compounded by the neoliberal approach in HE that has been affected by globalisation. That HE has been expanded to meet skills training through TVETs, has also amplified the HE dilemma. I discussed the TVET dilemma in Chapter 4, although my contention is that the TVET process may also be a little skewed as the majority of students that seem to flock to these institutions are black, since they are continuously excluded by universities, more so the historically advantaged institutions, and the pull towards the TVETs is the bursaries granted by the Higher Education and Training sector. These institutions also have their downside.

My argument in this regard is the lack of ethics of care in the implementation of policies. For instance, the Ministry of Higher Education and Training has not come out with a process that aims to help students from poor schools that want to be part of the university system. Instead, a considerable amount of money has been ploughed into the TVETs to produce skilled labour to meet globalisation needs. Since the effect of globalisation on the South African economy indicates that HE institutions are excluding students from poor schools because of globalisation pressures, I want to refer to Habermas (2005), Ball (2001) and Altbach (2004) who state that there should be coherence between national and international needs. Although Habermas (2005), Ball (2001) and Altbach (2004) seem generally to agree that globalisation is here to stay, they however mention that it is important that policymakers develop policies that are able to attain rationality in relation to South African circumstances. Edwards and Usher (2008) concur and

state that globalisation cannot be ignored. Because of that and in order to resuscitate the vision for justice in HE coined in White Paper 3, I argue that there is a need for innovative disruption. This could come in the form of ethics of care in the universities policy documents, which would ensure that fairness, equality and individual rights are taken care of, and also encompass the principles of *ubuntu*, that emphasises that the well-being of the other is taken care of.

Since globalisation pressures have pushed HE institutions to opt for sustaining innovation, this is reflected in the institutions embracing meritocracy in their access granting and thus exacerbating the exclusion problems. I want to contend that it is necessary that decision-makers at HE institutions (alumni, administration and faculty members) according to Christensen and Eyring (2011), take the initiative and plan their policies to recognise differences, as such a process has the potential to validate the other, and promote equity at the same time.

3.6 Conclusion

In the breakdown of the effect of globalisation on HE, I have concluded that globalisation could have affected the four universities in my study (CPUT, UCT, SU and UWC) in different ways, especially since their histories illustrate an aspect of difference, with UCT and US representing privilege, and CPUT and UWC having a historically disadvantage status. The outcome seems to pronounce globalisation as having brought an element of competition among institutions of HE, which in a way tend to stir racial inequalities, in a country that has a legacy of inequalities. For instance, those that represent privilege tend to want to hold on to their prestige cultures for global recognition. They do this by focusing their recruitment strategies towards gifted learners, and often learners from poor schools are left out. The cardinal reality is that learners from poor schools are black. This then becomes construed as the universities being racially exclusive, which may or may not be true, but a strategy triggered by the pressures of globalisation. To support this argument I draw from the 2015 students' protest actions. For instance, at the height of #RhodesMustFall, which was a protest against white privilege, CPUT and UWC seemed safe from the uproar perhaps because of their histories of being historically disadvantaged universities, although the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 scheduled that the two institutions cater for coloured students only. But, when the #FeesMustFall campaign started, CPUT and UWC were also heavily affected. In a way, the students themselves may possibly view their

dilemmas as race related at UCT and SU; hence, their perceptions of the statues, and other symbols as the remnants of apartheid, that needed to be purged. In the present era, all four institutions have to cater for black students, rich or poor, although CPUT and UWC have since the mid to late 1980s opened their doors to black students (UWC Online 2019, CPUT Online, 2019). My contention therefore is that since the four institutions are now required by law to recruit black students, the majority of whom survive just above the food poverty line, and mostly on a state grant, what would be necessary at these institutions would be policies that aim to engender social justice. Engendering social justice does not only mean free education, but also the acknowledgement of African languages in order to acknowledge the existence of the other. Essentially engendering social justice ought to ensure that all is equal: equity, access, participation and rights. When social justice is begotten, social cohesion tends to be automatically promoted. In Chapter 5, I examine the understanding in these institutions of their role in engendering social justice, as this is relatively important in South Africa, considering that to this day inequalities seem to be visible.

Chapter 4

A DECONSTRUCTIVE ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION WHITE PAPER 3: A PROGRAMME FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION ALONGSIDE THE WHITE PAPER FOR POST SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: BUILDING AN EXPANDED INTEGRATED POST SCHOOL SYSTEM

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I endeavoured to explain paradoxes that emerge in the interpretation of the White Paper 3 and WPPSET that may have distressed the implementation of the said policy documents by the HE institutions in my study. I also attempted to explain that the nuanced interpretation of the said White Papers to some extent seems to be influenced by the institutional cultures of the universities in my study. Things have become worse since in recent years the institutional cultures seem to be driven and influenced by global ideology. The findings in my analysis of the institutional cultures reveal that the institutions are likely to be experienced as having overwhelming institutional cultures by students from poor schools. Not only that the contours that emerge have also been revealed as having similar predispositions as that of the apartheid system's institutional culture, although the universities claim to have transformed. For instance, the admissions policies rest on admissions based on "colour-blindness" (Carr, 2016:51). Colour-blindness is an inequitable process, in that it tends to be hostile towards students who do not possess the capital these institutions require; hence, the difficulties the majority of poor students experience when they attempt to gain access to these institutions (Mouton et al., 2013:286). Some of these institutions still seem to be extensively besieged and sometimes threatened by students' protest actions.

Colour blindness has a negative consequence on a large portion of black students, because when institutions recruit or accept black students' applications, they tend to alienate those from poor schools, and select those from well-resourced schools, as their recruitment processes are based on meritocracy. The subject of meritocracy is relative, especially if students do not share similar academic encounters. Why do the institutions in my study base their admissions policies on meritocracy, if they claim to want to be inclusive? In my opinion, their inclusivity should be seen as a façade, as these institutions know exactly the type of students in whom they are interested;

hence, their tendency to include mostly black students from affluent schools. Even then, some of the same students from affluent schools tend to be equally shattered when they end up in social sciences instead of their aspired degree choices, because they might have fared badly in their NBTs, and their FPS being not good enough for certain faculties. I will discuss this at length in the next chapter.

As a concern for the above issues, I have used a deconstructive analysis approach to analyse the policy objectives of the White Paper 3 and Education White Paper for Post-School Education and Training to identify the aspect of the policies that might have carried nuanced interpretations. I have opted for this approach, as the deconstructive approach can isolate and clarify the conditions that could permit for nuanced interpretation that would destabilise the implementation of a policy framework, more so conditions that could trigger the reasons behind the misrepresentation of the policy framework. This might also help me to interpret the reasons behind protest actions such as the #FeesMustFall, and cries for decolonisation of HE in the form of the symbolic #RhodesMustFall and Open Stellenbosch movements that began in 2015. These movements seem to have remained dormant in the current year, as NSFAS seems to be facilitating the free education bursaries fairly, although there are still cases where students complain about meals and residence allowances here and there. Not in so many words, but this illustrates that challenges in HE are more than free education.

Additionally, my argument wants to assume that a nuanced interpretation of any policy framework should to a degree be a concern for policymakers. To explain this form of reasoning I have cited Badaat's argument (2010:9), where he states, "the transformation agenda in higher education embodies paradoxes, in so far as what government and institutions seek to pursue simultaneously". The government, as in the case of South Africa, might seek to redress inequities of the past, while institutions as much as they may want the same, might want to be measured against the best internationally; hence, the prevalent struggles in HE. Badaat (2010:9) also refers to "the paradoxes raise social and political dilemmas", especially when difficult choice are to be made, on what needs to be traded off, whether it is national goals or strategies of institutions. This therefore suggests that to pre-empt and to an extent prevent, social and political dilemmas, policymakers should attempt to draft unambiguous policies.

For instance, with regard to the application of the admissions policies at universities, universities are confronted by conflicts in the assessment of potential first year students, because of students' unequal schooling encounters. Mouton et al. (2013:288) support this notion, and contend that problems surrounding schooling encounters can be greatly attributed to unequal apartheid experiences, and this becomes a dilemma for universities since they want to be part of the global village, and they cannot achieve their goals with students with encounters that are not likely to get the institutions the needed results. Additionally, unequal education encounters could also be attributed to many privileged learners attending private schools or former Model C schools, whilst poor learners always fall into the category of being 'under-prepared', because the schools they attend are under-resourced. In cases such as these, the Ministry of Education should develop a blue-print that allows for institutions to grant access to students from poor schools, instead of creating a path that pushes the majority of these students to TVETs. In the absence of guidelines like these in the development of admissions policies, university policies are likely to lean towards prepared learners, and flout the national goals that are geared towards the redress of imbalances caused by the apartheid regime. Besides, the exclusion of the students without capital makes the university systems efficient, as they would not have the burden of students who do not finish their degrees on time, and the through-put of students would always be prominent.

Conversely, this form of bias is easily justified because the White Papers' guiding principles tend to be fluid. For instance, White Paper 3 communicated the language of equity, redress and democracy as substantiated in clauses 1.18, 1.22, 1.23, 1.24. According to the evidence presented through the deconstructive analysis of these clauses, the HE institutions could then interpret these clauses to suit their own needs and in conflict with what the White Paper envisioned. For instance, if institutions want to be measured against the best, they are likely to think first of their efficacies first, which mostly fall outside the equity and redress agenda, and they would then recruit students who match this criterion. Furthermore, it is quite unfortunate that efficacies at universities are not only limited to the curriculum, they extend to the institutional culture. In the case of South African HE, in most historically advantaged institutions, the institutional culture is 'a way of life' since their 'story stock' dates back centuries (Suransky & Van der Merwe, 2014:4). This then implies that as much as the institutions have bought into the transformation agenda, they have reputations to maintain. The institutional culture then demands that policymakers focus on an elite crop of students.

The historically disadvantaged institutions on the other hand, have efficacies that pale in comparison to historically advantaged institutions as their institutions have a history of being underdeveloped and underprivileged, dating back to the apartheid era. According to Cloete (2006:276), the situation has not changed much since the financial position of the historically black universities has worsened as funding has followed the students to the historically advantaged institutions, especially as recent years have seen an exodus of former Model C and private schooled black students to historically advantaged institutions. Cloete (2006:276) goes on to say, “[i]n rand terms, the government’s support of the historically black universities dropped by R102-million over the 1999–2001 budget cycle while the historically white Afrikaans-medium universities gained more than R230-million (22%) in subsidies.” The status quo has not changed at all even in 2019. For instance, with the recent funding allocations, RU, UCT, SU, Wits, UKZN, and UP received far more allocation funding per full time equivalency (FTE) than the historically disadvantaged institutions. The two institutions that were allocated more than the rest are University of Mpumalanga and Sol Plaatje University (De Wet: Business Insider SA Online, 2019).

It is against this backdrop that I have reached a conclusion that several factors, but mostly institutional autonomy, influence subjectivity in relation to the decisions that universities take. For instance, in the implementation of White Paper 3 that had its major focus on redress, nothing changed that much until with the introduction of WPPSET, which expanded the post-schooling provision. Still, this has not helped much either, because instead of the universities expanding their capacities, students from poor schools are pushed towards the TVET stream particularly because of their results, as well as their socioeconomic standing. To explain this assertion, I have isolated conflicting priorities between the institutions and the Department of Education and Training policy framework. Cloete (2006:270) also introduces a different perspective, which points to the lack of monitoring systems during the implementation of White Paper 3. Cloete (2006) says, “[t]he government did not put in place any rewards for those institutions that started changing, nor did it apply sanctions to those institutions that did not change.” This may be read as the sigh that the government might never manage to apply any sanctions on institutions because all HE institutions have the autonomy to carve their own paths. This suggests the Ministry of Higher Education and Training have relinquished their powers to enforce any rules on the institutions of HE because the Ministry has given all the powers to the institutions.

In the next paragraphs, I give a detailed interpretation of the White Paper 3 guiding principles and the main objectives of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training, I highlight incoherencies, gaps, contradictory discourse and any form of language that may seem arbitrary, and which may thwart probabilities for disruption.

4.1.1 Towards an understanding of deconstruction

To set the tone, in this sub-section I begin with the delineation of the concept of deconstruction as offered by Norris (2004) and Caputo (2004), followed by the deconstruction exercise of the policy framework.

Norris (2004:21) explains two facets of the deconstructive process, which are the literary and philosophical aspects. Norris (2004) says that when using the literary aspect to deconstruct a text, there is the likelihood that alternative interpretations of text would emerge. On the other hand, when using the philosophical aspect to deconstruct a text or deconstruct a message within the text, abstract concepts emerge, which in many instances can tend to make one misinterpret the actual message of the text. As my extrapolation of Norris' depiction, I understand deconstruction as an exercise that brings out conflict between what the texts say and what is understood.

On the other hand, John Caputo (2004:31) mentions that in Derrida's expressions deconstruction is not a process or a method, but a demonstration that in the derivation of words and meanings in a text, readers should not look for fixed meanings of words and sayings, the articulations should be seen as propositions that can be broken down. Caputo (2004:33) says, "everything in deconstruction is turned towards opening and expanding and cracking nutshells whenever they appear".

Drawing from these clarifications, in the next paragraphs I start with an analysis of the policy framework of the apartheid era, followed by the policy framework in a democratic South Africa. This precedes the deconstruction exercise, as it places in context as to why South Africa needed to have the present policy framework.

4.1.2 Background to South African education policy framework

To promote stability and the white privilege, prior to the 1994 democratic elections, the apartheid government employed a structural-functionalist approach to govern South Africa. Giddens (1984:294) explains functionalism and structuralism, as a manifestation of a naturalistic standpoint, and both are likely to be inclined towards capitalism objectivism. Both structuralism and functionalism strongly emphasise the pre-eminence of the social whole over its individual parts. This suggests that the social order is made up of separate groupings, the dominant group and the subordinate group, which becomes a functional part of the whole. In capitalism objectivism the working class and dominant class are made to cooperate with each other to contribute towards a 'progressive' economic system and a 'stable society'. I have placed progressive economy and stable society in inverted commas, as my contention is that the manner by which the society functioned in the apartheid era, was neither progressive, nor stable, especially if we discuss the imbalanced policy framework. For example, in the apartheid era, not all members of the South African community participated in the economy. Black people were the nonessential members of the South African community. Those with privilege enjoyed all privileges that came with race superiority. Therefore I contend that one cannot view the South African economy at the time as progressive, or the society as stable.

Giddens' (1984) outlook seems also to tell of the present socio-economic lives of the South African community, which still seem exceedingly disparate. As an example of the disparities, I am referring to Mouton et al.'s (2013) early discourse about privileged learners attending private schools and former Model C schools, and learners from underprivileged backgrounds attending underdeveloped schools. My argument around these disparities is they are a symbol of involuntary structuration that expresses the representation of a capitalist society. The apartheid laws maintained functionalism and structuralism, but somehow these representations seem to be embedded in the normalised systems that come with globalisation. The effect of this in the economy suggests a scenario that even though things change they still remain the same, thus suggesting that even though South Africa is a democracy with the present government advocating for equal opportunities, the imbalances continue to exist.

In the previous chapter, I referred to the fact that with globalisation having settled in South Africa, it has increased the big divide between the affluent and the poor. As stated before, it is unfortunate that the colour of poor continues to be black. The only difference concerning the past and the present disparities is the tradition of the dominant class being white, with the subordinate class being the black majority was unconcealed, whereas presently the lines are blurred as the legislation seems to make South Africa an egalitarian society, even though South Africa is still as fragmented as it was in the past, more so in the education system.

Consequently, the fragmented education system in the past emphasised the social standing, and sustained the mobility or immobility of the groups. Ironically this is still the same today: learners from poor schools seem motionless, as the schools they attend, are disabling. Aronowitz and Giroux (1985:74) corroborate my claim that the effectiveness of structural-functionalism is embedded in the hidden curriculum, and that in a structural-functionalist approach, only structural components exist, and an individual's social background determines his or her fate. There is neither individual development nor social mobility. An individual is destined to remain within his social echelon grouping, and serve the social structure; hence, the reason that this study advocates for the disruption of systems that are unresponsive to the transformation agenda.

4.1.2.1 Education policy framework in the apartheid South Africa

Considering the inequitable past of South Africa, the education encounters of black students from poor schools have been deemed inadequate, while their white counterparts seemed to continue to be prepared for middle and senior management, and are way ahead of their peers in their understanding of the norms of business. Corroborating my assertion is Seroto (2013:99) who claims that during the apartheid era, Dr Eiselen championed separate development, which became beneficial to the white community. When taking Seroto's (2013) assertion, the apartheid education policy framework should be blamed for having disadvantaged Africans, although at the same time it could be argued that it subliminally affected the white community too, especially those who spoke against the injustices happening around them. Those that questioned the differences, were either imprisoned or slayed. The implication is that the apartheid education policy framework transmitted a hidden curriculum that made white students compliant. This also

suggests that because white students never saw a reason to question their privilege, it can then mean the apartheid education equally affected them negatively.

Seroto (2013:102) also refers to Bantu Education, introduced through The Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953, as one of those ineffective education systems, with a hidden curriculum designed not to allow African children to dream beyond their servitude roles. Pampallis (1991:184) corroborates Seroto's claim and states "[t]he Bantu Education system was meant mainly to provide basic knowledge for unskilled manual workers, to train African children to accept an inferior position in society and to promote ethnic (as opposed to national) consciousness in students." Habermas (2005:107), as quoted in the previous chapter in his definition of nation state (see 3.2), mentions that the 'state' is more a legal component of the concept, and 'nation' as bound by culture and language. From this assertion therefore, it is sufficient for me to argue that the apartheid system did not see Africans as part of their nation. Unfortunately, this disparity seems to have embedded itself in the present system, as the majority of African students seem to be neglected, because they are inadequately prepared by their schools, and they are consigned to TVETs despite their wished to get into HE. This is unfortunate, because, as I mentioned earlier, the TVETs also somewhat push the students out. The injustices that poor students suffer, suggest that many students from poor schools are likely to be defeated even before they even start thinking about HE; hence, it is important that the students' lived experiences are acknowledged when they enter or seek admission to universities.

Another imbalanced feature in the apartheid policy framework, as explained by Pampallis (1991:184), is Dr HF Verwoerd's commentary when he justified reserving education as a privilege set aside for whites. Verwoerd said:

There is no place [for the Bantu] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour ... Until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his own community and *mised* him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze.

This was further extended by the apartheid government by means of the Extension of University Act No. 45 of 1959, which prohibited Africans from attending white universities, except with special government permission. We therefore have historically disadvantaged institutions and

historically advantaged institutions. This unreasonable system, if viewed with a structural functionalism lens, suggests that while the apartheid system ensured that blacks remained an inferior group, a superior group was also supported on the side to ensure that the members of this group benefit from all spheres of the apartheid system; hence, the disparities that are prevalent today, from schooling encounters to higher education. Ramdass (2009:114) succinctly explains that the legacy of apartheid has left footprints in all government spheres. Although Ramdass' argument is focused mostly on the disparities in the salaries of academics, his assertion however touches a raw nerve as it affirms that imbalances in general are a norm in the HE space. Mouton et al. (2013:287) share Ramdass' sentiment. In their quotation, they cite the struggles experienced by black students from poor schools when attempting to gain access into historically advantaged institutions. Mouton et al. (2013:287) claim that black students from poor schools are "underprepared" for historically advantaged institutions, because their schooling encounters do not prepare them enough for historically advantaged institution encounters. Mouton et al. (2013:288) also refer to the language of tuition as one of the barriers that obstruct many black students' success in HE. Mouton et al. (2013) state that since many students are actually second or third language English speakers, the mastery of English often compromises their ability to excel. From these assertions therefore, my contention is that the apartheid policy framework has had an impact on how education is experienced today, especially by students from poor schools. I further argue that this is one of the reasons that present policymaking at university ought to disrupt certain practices in order to accommodate the students that continue to be subjugated by the system.

But even with the contentions I present above in my dissection of the apartheid policy framework, my conclusion is that although the apartheid policy framework created the imbalance regarding the capital that the students present, global influences have compounded the present-day dilemmas in HE, and its impact is felt more by the learners from poor schools who want to access HE. Ramdass (2009:118) argues that globalisation has brought a paradigm shift in education, in that it has introduced a new set of ideas, values and knowledge across the world, and thus changed the functions of students and teachers, and education at large. With these developments therefore, for the HE institutions in my study, the imperative should be to open the doors of learning for students from poor schools too, as poor students also want to savour these new endeavours. Besides, if poor students are not assisted, their plight might never improve as

globalisation seems to be equally prejudiced, thus ignoring the fact that poor students' education encounters are a legacy of the apartheid system.

Below I introduce some developments in basic education as the development in basic education are the foundation of general learning, and have a bearing on higher education.

4.1.2.2 The post-apartheid basic education policy framework

In 1997, South Africa introduced an outcomes-based education system (OBE), to overcome the fragmentation of the apartheid system. The implementation of OBE presented a few complexities, because it had a “number of disparate influences” (Jansen & Christie, 1999:14). The complexities led to OBE summarily being replaced by the Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R–9 (2000), and the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10–12 (2002). According to the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga's, foreword in the Curriculum Statement Policy Statement, “[o]ngoing implementation challenges resulted in another review in 2009” (Department of Education, 2011), which resulted in the combination of two National Curriculum Statements, for Grades R–9 and Grades 10–12 into a single document now known as National Curriculum Statement Grades R–12. Not that the current curriculum does not have its challenges. According to Motsatsi (2012:62), teachers found the National Curriculum Statement hard to implement, as there was too much administrative work. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) followed. This came as a revision of the NCS (National Curriculum Statement), and gives teachers detailed guidelines of what to teach and assess on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis.

In my view, each time the Department of Basic Education introduces a new policy framework, teachers are expected to adjust to a new mode of teaching. The terminology also changes; therefore the implementation summarily becomes a challenge where there is a lack of resources. Therefore the teachers, more especially from ill-resourced schools, are consistently distressed by the system, and the evidence becomes the matric results, which unfortunately the Department of Basic Education uses to benchmark the effectiveness of schools, even though the circumstances of schools are not the same. Akoojee and McGrath (2003:32) corroborate this assertion, and go further to point out that the black students' plight has been exacerbated by the impact of

globalisation on South Africa, as the country abandoned RDP for GEAR, due the globalisation demands.

My intention for beginning with the socio-economic positions, including the poor schools saga, is to point at the structural factors that may have contributed to the deferral of the objectives of White Paper 3 by some HE institutions. Also, through the introduction of the social strata I wanted to illustrate different social classes that define the students in my study, and to point at the structural factors that have influenced negative consequences on implementation of White Paper for Post-school Education and Training. Therefore, in my deconstructive analysis of the policy framework below, I point to some aspects of the policy framework that seem to neglect the individual differences of the students for which it is supposed to cater.

4.2 (De)construction of the Education White Paper 3: A programme for the transformation of HE

In this sub-section, my discussion begins with the general outlook of White Paper 3, and then progresses to a brief overview of the guiding principles. This is followed by a discussion of the guiding principles to locate the reasons it had to be superseded by WPPSET. My focus is placed mostly on the guiding principles, since they set the tone for the transformation agenda in HE. Clauses 1.18, 1.22, 1.23 and 1.24 of the guiding principles become my discussion points, as the outcome in the implementation seemed to reflect a varied interpretation of these clauses. Below I expand on my claim.

4.2.1 The general outlook of White Paper 3

Since one of the aspects of the vision for HE, as aptly described in the White Paper 3 policy framework, was to transform HE into a dynamic force that would “stimulate, direct and mobilise the creative and intellectual energies of people towards meeting the challenge of reconstruction and development” (Department of Education, 1997:11), the inference therefore was that the HE transformation trajectory of South Africa had to fall in line with the RDP, that was equally aimed at ensuring that South Africa engages critically and creatively with global imperatives, while encouraging academic empowerment for all students regardless of gender, race, class or creed. But as these objectives were not met, the imperative is that the HE institutions in my study

rethink their transformation ethos to look at what was wrong within their systems, as this could shape the disruption processes at their institutions. In the next sub-section, I deal with the guiding principles to locate where deferral in transformation could have arisen.

4.2.1.1 Guiding principles

The guiding principles, as outlined in the Education White Paper 3, seem to have been appropriate for the promotion of human dignity, equality and freedom. More to the point is they mapped the trajectory of policymaking in order to engender social justice in the HE band. To set the tone for my comment on the guiding principles, my starting point has been to cite the guiding principles as they appear in the policy document, and then deconstruct the guiding principles to highlight the paradoxes that could have surfaced.

Clause 1.18 Equity and redress

The principle of equity and redress speaks to the matters of inequality that are the effects of the social constructions and practices of the past. Equity and redress as a principle was formulated to guide higher education institutions through in the creation of fair opportunities for all, notwithstanding gender, race, disability, and/or other forms of discrimination or disadvantage (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:11).

The above clause suggests that in the quest to engender social justice, the transformation policies of the universities were framed “not only to abolish all existing forms of unjust differentiation” (DHET, 2013:11), but they were to also illustrate measures they would take to fund and ensure empowerment of all those that needed it. My extrapolation of the empowerment of all those that need it, meant the empowerment of students regardless of their race, gender or social standing.

Clause 1.19 and 1.20 Democratisation and development

I have grouped the two principles together, as they speak to the organisational construct, thus how to attain democracy, and how to create a sound organisation. To realise democracy at an institutional level therefore, policymaking ought to emphasise the development of structures that are representative, tolerant, and participatory in the provision of a peaceful and communal life. In short, the two guiding principles, democratisation and development, as a framework gave

direction for institutional culture overhaul to benefit society, in the production of human capacity that would be skilled.

Clauses 1.21 and 1.22 Quality, and effectiveness and efficiency

Secondary to democratisation and development, are the principles of quality, and effectiveness and efficiency. The emphasis on these guiding principles is geared towards the maintenance and evaluation of educational qualifications against set standards, with a view to ensure that the academic qualifications that the institution offers could be able to hold their own nationally and internationally. This then suggests that the institutions were expected to ensure that their systems are effective and structured to ensure that institutions operate within the bounds of affordability and sustainability.

Clauses 1.23, 1.24 and 1.25 Academic freedom, institutional autonomy and public accountability

Lastly, the guiding principles consisted of principles that speak to academic freedom, institutional autonomy and accountability in the pursuit of academic endeavours. The guiding principle begins with drawing from the Constitution, “academic freedom and scientific inquiry are fundamental rights protected by the Constitution” (Department of Education, 1997:13). The guideline explains that although the institutions will not be censured, they however were expected to self-regulate in the areas of student admissions, curriculum, methods of teaching and assessment, research, establishment of academic regulations and the internal management of resources generated from private and public sources. In addition, the HE institutions are supposed to be accountable, not only to their own governing bodies and the institutional community, but also to the broader society (Department of Education, 1997:13).

4.2.1.2 A discussion of the guiding principles of White Paper 3

After analysis of the text to draw attention to silences and contradictions, I have established that some guiding principles seem to oppose the essence of the message of the other. For example, clauses 1.18 of the guiding principles, equity and redress, and 1.19, democratisation, and 1.20 development, highlight the imbalances within the HE processes that need to be altered. Clauses 1.21 quality, and 1.22 effectiveness and efficiency speak to the concept of reconstruction and

development in order to attain a balanced HE system that can serve all students, notwithstanding gender, race or creed, and any other forms of social prejudice.

Until now, in every practical sense, the message conveyed specifies the need for transformation in HE, to an extent that all universities are accommodative, even to students who were previously excluded by the HE system. Then, suddenly, clauses 1.23 academic freedom and 1.24 institutional autonomy seem to express a very different outlook. The message seems to be that in their pursuit of academic excellence, institutions can exercise their institutional independence to attain desired outcomes, which lean towards “an established academic climate characterised by free and open debate, critical questioning of prevailing orthodoxies and experimentation with new ideas” (Department of Education, 1997:14).

Since the two clauses seem open-ended, they have no predetermined limits or boundaries. Therefore, they are open to the exploitation of the system. It is likely that even during the implementation of White Paper 3 they might have been used in a self-serving manner. For example, institutions with a history of prestige may have used the guidelines to sustain their prestige in their quest to create a climate and institutional culture that is progressive, and which would make institutions celebrated globally. I have used Ramdass (2009:111) to support my assertion. He states that he slightly understands the predicament of the universities since “the tension between implementing changes that need both time and considerable resources to work their way through, and propinquity of issues that need to be addressed at the sites of implementation” could have been extensive, especially since global pressures slipped in instantaneously with the dawn of democracy in South Africa. Ramdass (2009:116) then goes on to say that although he understands the dilemmas, striking a balance between global imperatives and domestic needs ought be an imperative, if inequalities are to be dislocated. Ramdass (2009) then uses the South African Basic Education Achilles heel, Mathematics, as an example. He says that since black children in the era before 1994 were seen as unsuitable candidates to learn Mathematics and Science, so the development of Mathematical skills to put black students on a par with others should be a priority, even though nurturing or up-skilling programmes to meet global needs, to fulfil clauses 1.20 development and 1.21 quality seems tempting.

If I take Ramdass’ argument against the implementation of White paper 3, one can concede that

the implementation of White Paper 3 got derailed by opposing desires, one being to erase inequalities, and other being the desire for recognition according to global standards. For instance, in recent times it became part of the cultures of most universities to want to be catalogued within the ratings of the top universities. An example of this can be drawn from the SU website, on its historical background of the university, which states:

The University is amongst South Africa's leading tertiary institutions based on research output, student pass rates and rated scientists, and is recognised internationally as an academic institution of excellence. It boasts the highest weighted research output per full-time academic staff member of all South African universities and the second-highest number of scientists in South Africa who have been rated by the National Research Foundation (NRF). It also has the highest student success rate in the country. SU is cementing its reputation as a world-class institution. According to the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, SU is one of the top 300 universities in the world, and among the top 20 in BRICS countries. It also features among the world's elite institutions in 10 of the 36 subjects featured in the QS World University Rankings by Subject for 2015. SU was also included in the 2014 CWTS Leiden Ranking, which measures the scientific performance of 750 major universities worldwide (Stellenbosch University Online 2019)

My extrapolation of the declaration above is that HE institutions that have built a definite reputation may find it difficult to create a layer that is flexible enough to accommodate students with insubstantial education encounters. Mouton et al. (2013:288) corroborate my claim and state that the vulnerabilities experienced by poor students ensue from unequal schooling encounters, and that these realities tend to complicate things during assessment for placement in HE, because their rivals for placement are mostly white children and some black children from privileged social strata who were privately or former Model C schooled, which are perceived as the best schools in the country, while learners from underprivileged strata (mostly black children) attend less prestigious institutions.

On the other hand, Mouton et al. (2013:288) also state that although they believe that the selection of possible first-year students should identify students with the potential to flourish, irrespective of where they went to school, but they do believe that the reason to select students from former Model C and private schools, could perhaps be that most institutions are driven by international competitiveness to produce skilled workers; hence, their recruitment tends to select

students with high potential and reject those who seem to have no potential. The disadvantage in this situation is because of our segregated past, the exclusion of learners ‘without’ potential tend to have racial connotations, especially since those who are likely to be excluded at the worst of times, are mostly students from poor schools, and frequently black students. Because of this, if it is the historically advantaged institutions that are excluding, this may be construed as racial exclusion of students; hence, my argument speaks to the disruption of the systems that stand in the way of the inclusion of black students. From this point of view, it is sufficient for me to say for the reason that most institutions with the history of privilege seem to be the ones fixated with international competitiveness, as it is reflected in the above quotation, where the emphasis is placed on SU being featured in the top 300 universities in the world, it is easy to judge institutions such as SU as deliberately delaying the transformation of their universities, by perpetuating structural injustices of the past using the poor students’ personal shortcomings to keep them out. Young (2011:38) states “In principle, everyone should bear the costs of the choices and actions that are her own and in her control, and not expect others to shoulder some of the burden”. From this the imperative is for the institution to take responsibility for the plight of poor students, because according to Young (2011:38) in an egalitarian society, “People should be compensated for the disadvantage they suffer up to but not beyond the point where their disadvantage results from action in their control”. In the case of poor students in my study, their disadvantage can be traced back to the legacy of apartheid.

Also, on reflection, the perpetual #FeesMustFall-narrative, which has resulted into fully subsidised “free higher education and training for poor and working class South Africans” (Our Mission: NSFAS Online, 2019), is another source of distress for HE, because it continues to be one of the consequences that manifest themselves in racial terms, and sort of point at the challenges that were not addressed in the implementation of White Paper 3. From this outlook, my contention is the Ministry of Higher Education and Training might have seen this as a challenge considering that in the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training policy framework, the objective of the policy framework states, “although South Africa has discarded the apartheid regime, and replaced it with a democratic elected government, much remains to be done to rid the country of the injustices of its colonial and apartheid past” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:4). The policy framework objectives also state that to some extent inequalities exist in all social spheres in South Africa. The vision to transform higher education

into a dynamic force faltered because of the transition from RDP to GEAR (Department of Education, 1997:11). As much as a growing black middle class has been somewhat enabled through the new conditions that came with democracy, and its members have managed to transform their lives in many ways, there is still a large majority of South Africans that is still yet to attain a decent standard of living, and is still served by lower-quality public services and institutions (including public educational institutions), than the well-off (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:4).

Subsequent to my analysis of White Paper 3, to some extent I believe that the predominant challenges that continue to distress HE could be improved through the disruption of systems that seem to thwart transformation. Cloete (2006:270) intimates that the White Paper 3 guidelines were a satisfactory framework to redress imbalances, or rather were a sufficient starting point. The weaknesses emerged in the implementation because there were no conformity assessment programmes. From Cloete's claim, I imagine an establishment of a national body that would monitor compliance with the White Paper outline in the implementation of transformation programmes was necessary, although up to an extent this would have been seen as an interference with the institutional autonomy of the universities. The outcome would have assisted the Ministry of Higher Education to reward and sanction institutions. Probably, progress would have been made.

4.3 A deconstructive analysis of the main policy objectives of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training

The Ministry of Higher Education and Training introduced the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training: Building an expanded integrated post-school system, in 2013. This policy framework seems to be a complex document, as on one side it wants improvement on the transformation processes that begun with the White Paper 3 to a degree that the post-school band meets the needs of the country. And on the other hand, it wants to provide a wide range of high-quality options, as well as to improve articulation between HE institutions, and between universities and other post-school institutions. The main policy objectives however, have not changed: they remain building a fair, equitable, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. Below, I discuss the tenets of the main policy objectives.

4.3.1 The main policy objectives

The main policy objectives are comprised of five principles that are envisaged as necessary to guide HE and training institutions in policymaking, and in the implementation of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training. In the paragraphs below, I present the main factors, and then conclude by presenting a synopsis of the inconsistencies within the policy framework, and hence the inconsistencies in the implementation of the policy framework by the HE institutions.

Clause 2.1 Education and social justice

The White Paper for Post-school Education and Training commences with a reference to existing disparities in HE, which continue to exist despite HE institutions having had an interaction with, and implemented White Paper 3, and then declares that in order to move transformation beyond the then current parameters, it would be necessary that HE focuses on the realisation of social justice. To address social justice matters in education, the policy framework identifies the remnants of apartheid, such as inherent institutional culture that may prevent students' entry, as well as to remain in the system until they graduate, as a priority to unseat. The policy document also mentions "the achievement of great social justice is closely dependent on equitable access by all sections of the population to quality education" (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:5).

When looking at how the education and justice principle is presented, I contend that a solid argument around this principle should be to attain equitable access in HE, thus suggesting that the uneven distribution of HE opportunities should be altered. More than anything else, there should be some form of acknowledgement that, as much as there is a growing black middle class, a growing majority of poor black people exists right alongside it (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:4), and therefore the plight of the poor ought to be prioritised. This also intimates that to disrupt the status quo, the greater need is to look at every single condition that may affect the exclusion of students from poor schools in HE, because failure to do so will leave South Africa with a perpetual challenge of having a large proportion of people without prospects.

Clause 2.2 A single coordinated system

In relation to the single coordinated system, the policy document explains that a merger between the Department of Education and the Department of Labour, was an attempt to try and coordinate the administration, and also cultivate prospects for cooperation and mutual support among post-school institutions (public and private HE institutions, public and private technical and vocational education and training colleges (TVETs), the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), and the regulatory bodies responsible for qualifications and quality assurance such as South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), and the Quality Councils in Education (Department of Education and Training, 2013:6), so that the poor students can also be included into the HE and training system.

The policy document also explains the aim of this correlation as being a strategy to build a framework that can stimulate an interconnected movement between schools, HE and the workplace, as this could ensure that HE and training is able to deliver a variety of means to support students to attain post-school education. The White Paper for Post School Education and Training therefore requires that policymakers at HE and training institutions attempt to articulate policies that are aligned to the “strategic and operational plans and programmes with key national policy documents such as the National Development Plan, the New Growth Path, the Industrial Policy Action Plan and the Human Resources Development Strategy for South Africa” (Department of Education and Training, 2013:13), to effect this movement, so that the NGP 2020 and NDP 2030 targets are met. When one reads the new expansion in HE at face value this seems like ‘passing the buck’ to TVETs, and skills education training authorities (SETAs) credited on-the-job-training, to solve HE challenges, as well as an attempt to create skilled labour for a globalised economy. It is, however, unfortunate that unemployment has increased to 29% in 2019, which suggests that the NGP target would never be reached, which probably the reason it was replaced by the NDP. This assertion is corroborated by Business Tech Online (2019), which claims that according to Stats SA unemployment in the second quarter of 2019 jumped to 29%, and that within those that are unemployed “only 2,2% of the unemployed persons were graduates while 6,9% had other tertiary qualifications as their highest level of education”. This suggests that the tertiary qualification referred to may have been TVET education, which stands to show that there really is no need to push students towards college education, if even with those

encounters, people do not even gain employment. The question then is: is this correlation even necessary?

Clause 2.3 Expanding access, improving quality and increasing diversity

According to this objective, the extended HE and training system is meant to create an interconnected flow between the schooling system, HE and the workplace. The policy documents also reference its intention to develop additional provisions such as community colleges, which would also accommodate youths aged 15 to 24, who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). The White Paper also speaks of having some HE and training institutions being made focus schools, and others diversifying as this can improve quality and increase diversity in all institutions. This suggests that to meet this objective, institutional policymaking should have room for expanded courses and qualifications, outline financial support for students, and a plan to attain better quality education and training institutions. According to the 2030 Plan, the educational institutions will be differentiated according to an agreement between the individual institution and the DHET. Basically, the entire perspective is also to ensure that education and training is affordable for potential full-time and part-time studies (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:13)

Yet again, after an analysis of this objective I cannot help but reiterate that the policy document seems to speak more of the diversification of provisions to address the demands of skills shortages. However, according to Business Tech Online, 2019, unemployment may also be “due to a mismatch of the skills people learn and the needs of the market” and, “[w]ith the advent of the fourth industrial revolution, there is a danger that this mismatch will develop if the institutions do not realign their programmes. Due to the skills deficit, our countries are ill-prepared for technological change.” Further analysis points at a large number of inconsistencies. It is as if to a large degree, the ministry of HE and training, says mostly things that people want to hear, but the implementation of that often does not happen. Furthermore, nothing much is said about how the existing inequities at universities will eventually be addressed. That there were students who were alienated by the system, seems to have eluded the outline. Instead, the path created seems to push students to TVETs and probably the new college system in the pipeline, even though the results of the present strategy do not seem to work.

Clause 2.4 Education and work

Aligning itself to global imperatives, the Department of Higher Education and Training policy framework speaks to education and work. The framework suggests that policymaking by HE institutions should create a path to prepare students for the labour market, and at the same time empower individual students with enough resources to earn sustainable livelihoods through self-employment. This also suggests that HE and training institutions will need to establish policies that can show synergy with training available in workplaces, thus offering theoretical knowledge, which would then be enhanced by practical workplace experiences, as per the National Skills Accord, signed in July 2011 by all the partners in the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:8).

Clause 2.5 Responsiveness

In my introduction to this chapter, I referred to the need in South Africa for transformation to ensure that the country moves beyond its subjugating history. This objective therefore explains what needs to happen to put the country on that path. The policy framework stipulates that in the implementation of this objective, HE and training institutions should embark on policymaking that intends to overcome all forms of discrimination, and engender social justice. The White Paper for Post-school Education and Training outline stipulates that HE and training should respond to all transformational goals. This includes ensuring that skills development institutions are able to provide skills that can address challenges facing the industrial, commercial, and governmental institutions. Universities on the other hand are expected to undertake research to meet the economic and social needs of society, and building knowledge-generating partnerships with public and private enterprises, other government departments and other institutions in order to meet these needs (Department of Education, 2013:10).

What I have extrapolated from this objective is that since the country has skills shortages, the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training is focused more on addressing global needs, and the inequality challenge at universities today is an add-on. Whether the historically disadvantaged learners flock into the college system since the college system seems affordable, and there is also on-the-job training through SETAs (Department of Education and Training,

2013:13), inequality at universities is not a priority. Also, the perpetual financial inequity seemed to be addressed through the TVET and SETA paths.

4.4 Reflections

In the discourse, I have argued that the education policy framework under apartheid was skewed, and I have also discussed the disconnect in the implementation of the White Paper 3 policy framework at most historically advantaged institutions, which resulted in it failing to promote equitable resolutions in HE. This was followed by a discussion of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training, which was introduced to enhance the transformation agenda. Through the analysis of the main policy objectives of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training however, I have learnt that, like the White Paper 3, the policy framework has some incoherent clauses. The clauses in question are 2.1 Education and social justice, and 2.3 To expand access, improve quality and increase diversity. In 2.1 the policy document proposes that HE and training institutions shape the focus of their policies towards the redress of structural subjugation in order to displace inequalities that are still noticed according to race and gender amongst other perpetual disparities. At the same time, the policy outline proclaims, “[e]ducation will not guarantee economic growth, but without it economic growth is not possible and society will not fulfil its potential with regard to social and cultural development” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:5). When taking this citation into consideration, it makes me wonder if the policy framework does not disregard the power of education by insinuating that education may never engender social justice. A profitable country means a socially just country. So, how then would the HE institutions, especially historically advantaged institutions, attempt to attain social justice if the policy framework itself seems uncertain if it can address societal needs? For instance, the anticipation is that if the students gained access to higher education, they are likely to improve their livelihoods, which would affect the economy positively. This idea is then cemented in Clause 2.5, where it is stated that universities should ensure that their policies mount up to ensuring that knowledge to address societal needs is prepared for. The aim in this study was to find out how the four HE institutions in the Western Cape have interpreted these objectives. I find these objectives ambiguous.

Additionally, under Clause 2.3, the White Paper refers to 2013 figures from Statistics South Africa that depict a gloomy picture regarding the plight of NEETs aged 15 to 24 as a driving force behind the expansion of HE and training institutions. According to the White paper, “the so-called NEETs – comprise of 3.4 million young people, making up 40.3% per cent of persons in this the 15–24 age group who have no prospects” (Stats SA Online, 2019). From these figures, it is also pointed out that the NEETs rate is gender-skewed, being 29.7 per cent among men and 36.1 per cent among women, so the policymaking emphasis should ensure more opportunities for women (Department of Education and Training, 2013:7). The White Paper then explains that the expansion process will be a development of 20 years, which requires much ingenuity from the capacity of HE and training institutions, especially since their policymaking will need to be inclusive of the youth that is no longer in the education system and who is not working or being trained for work and older people “who require education and training opportunities in order to live fuller and more productive lives as both workers and citizens” (Department of Education and Training, 2013:7). When looking at this, according to Caputo’s deconstruction in a nutshell (1997:32), the statement seems like an axiom, considering that it is almost 20 year since the White Paper 3 came out, and there is still a continuous debate surrounding the inclusion of the historically disadvantaged students in HE. For instance, the HE and training system is struggling with the funding of current students, how then will it cope when it extends itself by including the youths who are not in any education system? Where would the funds come from? In the study, I assessed the extent to which HE and training institutions aim to disrupt their current systems so they can meet the 2020 and 2030 targets.

4.5 Conclusion

As much as South Africa has moved past its apartheid structures, educational matters on the other hand still seem to carry the rightist and leftist political debates as it was in the apartheid era. The difference is that the liberals have bought more into the global entrepreneurial race (Habermas, 2005). They believe in the absolute competition for a place in the social strata, such as, in order to enter certain universities, students need to be high achievers. On the other hand, there are others who believe in the opposition to social inequality of any form in HE, including myself. The sentiment is that if students from poor schools were equally exposed to similar educational encounters received by their privileged counterparts, they would also be able to

perform at their best, and be able to compete against their privileged counterparts. With the implementation of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training, the emphasis should be on disrupting the transformation processes at universities so that they can address domestic challenges that are perpetuated through poverty, inequality and unemployment.

In retrospect, I do however acknowledge that some transformation objectives in the implementation of White Paper 3 were attained, such as institutional restructuring that saw to the university mergers, and the development of the TVETs. There was also the establishment of a funding framework that to an extent has boosted the historically disadvantaged institutions, and alleviated the financial burden carried mostly by students from poor schools. Then again, the basis of my argument raises the idea that despite all what has been attained, the fundamental objectives around transformation, which can bring about restoration of dignity in the HE space, are yet to be attained. In the study, I therefore propose the disruption of processes I deem they are behind the stagnation of the transformation progress.

Chapter 5

EXAMINING THE EXTENT THROUGH WHICH POLICIES OF THE FOUR PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN THE WESTERN CAPE HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on an analysis of the transformation agendas of the four public universities in the Western Cape, namely UCT, SU, UWC, and CPUT to ascertain the attempts of the institutions to mediate the seemingly continuing financial and academic exclusion of poor students by HE institutions. The main focus of the investigation was to try and understand how the four universities in my study have re-imagined their transformation agendas following the introduction of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training: Building an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system. Furthermore, I wanted to understand how the universities were responding to the free higher education promise made by the former state president, Jacob Zuma, in December 2017. Even though the promise has been largely criticised as ill-timed, the reality is that financial difficulties are the root of most challenges distressing students from poor schools and HE at large, and which to some extent intensify academic exclusions that are inclined to be viewed by racially optic lenses, since the majority of students that often are excluded, or self exclude, tend to be black. I presented these findings in my master's thesis, in which I gave evidence that, the admissions and fees processes at the two universities in my study, then UCT and SU, excluded the majority of black students from impoverished schools from gaining access to higher education (Ngwenya, 2014:76).

Largely, the focus in this chapter was to discuss whether the re-conceptualised agendas of the institutions in the study are able to disrupt the biased attitude against poor students. Evidence of the bias attitude I am referring to, is the preferential treatment that seems to be received by students from affluent schools at the two historically advantaged institutions I studied then, especially if they were deemed academically superior (Ngwenya, 2014:77). Because of this seeming prejudice, be it academic or financial, in this chapter my endeavour is to deconstruct the manner by which the institutions in my study try to mediate the struggles that are related to the lower socio-economic backgrounds, which are often experienced by students from poor schools, against the subjectivity of the beliefs of the universities. Ultimately, the aim has been to identify

limitations in the policy framework, if such exists, to point at segments where disruption can be undertaken.

To conduct this analysis my attention remained on the artefacts I examined in my previous study, the external and internal exclusion of black undergraduate students from impoverished township schools in the Western Cape, namely recruitment and admissions policies, student diversity and equity policies, and student finance policies. In the current study, the vision and mission statements of the universities were included, as these documents are generally known to set the tone and direction of institutions. I opted to study the mentioned artefacts as I hoped that these might outline the extent through which the universities have carried out their transformation agendas.

5.2 Method

My analysis of the policy frameworks of the universities was pursued through a qualitative research methodology, whilst the method I used to analyse text is interpretive. My data collection has been mostly (con)textual, with a marginal part being an empirical interpretation of the 2015–2017 students' protest actions. I have used an interpretive method since the general idea of this study was to gain insight, and to interpret outlooks and actions, and other definable variables that seem to overwhelm policy implementation processes at the universities in my study (Plowright, 2012:95), and ultimately so I can point at areas that can benefit from disruption. I also used philosophical lenses such as culture, socio-economics, and ethics to answer my research question, and to analyse and rationalise my discourse surrounding HE reforms.

The authoritative and theoretical forms that drove my analysis included Christensen and Eyring's (2011) disruption theory, Noddings' (1998; 2002; 2003; 2006; 2013), Slote's (2007) and Held's (2006) ethics of care, Rancière's (1991) outlook on democracy and emancipation, Young's (2011) social connection perspective, and Derrida's (2004) theory of deconstruction as these perspectives are apt to undermine backsliding logic on policies, and can further define justifiable beliefs to recalibrate unsuccessful transformation processes.

Finally, since this chapter has been my attempt to understand transformation according to the public universities in the Western Cape, my anticipation has also been that the investigation

might also outline trends by which global influences may have pushed HE in South Africa to discount the primary needs of the country (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:xi).

Research question

The main question for the study was: Do public universities in the Western Cape provide sufficient support to aid African students from ill-resourced schools gain access to higher education? From the main question, the following sub-questions were asked:

- How do the four public universities in the Western Cape define their roles with regard to engendering social justice in HE?
- What strategies do the public universities in the Western Cape have in place to ensure that even students from ill-resourced schools gain access to HE?
- In what ways are these strategies lacking of an ethics of care?

Before venturing into the actual assessment of the transformation policies, below I offer a brief historical overview of each university in my study, to provide a contextual background of the institutions, and to ascertain the transformation progression of the institution.

5.3 Historical overview of the universities under study

The historical accounts presented in this section represent the overview of the four public universities in the Western Cape namely CPUT, UCT, UWC, and SU. What set the four institutions apart are their legacies of advantage, and that of disadvantage. There are two historically advantaged (UCT and SU) and two historically disadvantaged institutions (CPUT and UWC). On the other hand, what these universities have in common is the manner in which the institutions were provisioned as single race institutions. For some strange reasons, in recent years we tend to tie this segmentation to the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950, yet the culture of exclusion dates back further than the 1948 National Party general election victory, since most institution were established before 1948, save for one part of CPUT, and UWC. The only interesting detail from the provisioning of the institutions in the Western Cape during the apartheid era is that there is no evidence that suggests the existence of a university established for African students in the Western Cape. This observation therefore qualifies the argument that

the exclusion of African students has been a long-standing tradition in the Western Cape. It is from this context that my claim refers to the four universities as having similar exclusive traits, as they did not accommodate African students, until the late 1980s when the winds of change began to blow.

After the 1994 democratic election, one would imagine that the notion of exclusion would have changed to an extent that the public HE institutions in my study would also promote equity and equality through processes that are accommodative to all students notwithstanding gender, race or creed (South Africa, 1996: 5) only to find that to date there still would be contentions around issues of inequity within the HE institutions in this area. Below, I introduce an overview of each institution, beginning with CPUT to show the existing disparities at the four institutions in my study.

5.3.1 Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)

CPUT was established in 2005, after the merger of Cape Technikon and Peninsula Technikon. This merger was part of a national transformation process that transformed the higher education landscape in South Africa (About CPUT Online, 2019). The CPUT website says the history of the two institutions dates back to the 1900s, with Cape Technikon being the first to be established in the 1920s. The website explains that Cape Technikon went through a few name changes, which were attached to the changes of the curriculum of the college as it progressed. For example, Cape Technikon was once Cape Technical College, and in the early part of 1960s it was renamed College for Advanced Technical Education, and later Cape College for Advanced Technical Education. And after the promulgation of the Technikons Act in 1976, the institution became known as the Cape Technikon. From its inception, Cape Technikon was provisioned for white students, and this provisioning meant Cape Technikon was better resourced than Peninsula Technikon. According to the history of CPUT, the make-up of the student population only changed in 1987 “after Cape Technikon applied for and was granted permission to have the Government’s regulation lifted on the quota for black students” (History of CPUT Online, 2019).

The Peninsula Technikon, on the other hand, was established for coloured students who were to be trained as artisans in 1962 (History of CPUT Online, 2019). Like Cape Technikon, the college also underwent numerous name changes, namely Peninsula Technical College, Peninsula

College for Advance Technical College, and in 1979 it became known as Peninsula Technikon, (PenTech). Although PenTech has a legacy of disadvantage, it however did not grant access to any students other than coloured students, because of the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950. On other side of the continuum, the Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act No. 26 of 1970, confined Africans in the homelands designated for each of the nine ethnic groups (South African History Online, 2014). Needless to say, this also suggests that PenTech, like Cape Technikon, opened its doors to African students only in 1987. In the present era, nevertheless, Cape Technikon and Peninsula Technikon now operate as CPUT. Gaining access to the university is extended to all races, with African students being in the majority, which on the surface could mean that the admissions processes at CPUT are collegial towards African students.

5.3.2 University of Cape Town (UCT)

According to UCT Online, 2019, UCT was founded in 1829 as a boys' school, and established only in 1918 as a university. UCT Online, 2019 also explains that UCT is an advocate of academic excellence and tradition. As it is pointed out, "UCT's reputation for excellence is strengthened by its distinctive research, led by its distinguished faculty, many of whom are world-leaders in their field" (UCT Online, 2019). The website goes on to mention that UCT is a cosmopolitan university, with a diverse student population, from all over Africa, and the rest of the world. UCT included black students during the height of the apartheid years in South Africa, even though it was only a handful. I am tempted to argue that there isn't a little bit of subjectivity there considering the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 imposed the exclusion policy on every institution. Be that as it may, one also wonders if the students resided in the students' residences especially since the students who were allowed to study at UCT, had to be granted permission to study there by the authorities. In any event, on the account of the existence of the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950, alongside influx control by way of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act No. of 1923 (South African History Online, 2014), which was only repealed in 1986, the UCT website does acknowledge that an influx of African students only happened after the Abolition of Influx Control Act No 68 of 1986 like UWC and CPUT. Assuming that UCT included African students prior this act, black students may have been confined to certain courses, which were deemed relevant to Africans. This claim is established and discussed extensively in the subsections that address the research question.

Despite the incompatible scenarios I refer to above, the intention of this study was not to condemn, but to examine the transformation strategies of the institutions since 2015, thus taking into account the existence of the White Paper for Post-schools Education and Training, and how the institutions are planning to confront the free education promise.

5.3.3 University of the Western Cape (UWC)

Like CPUT, the University of the Western Cape emerged to cater for coloured students. The difference between the two institutions is UWC formed an integral part of the University of South Africa (UWC Online, 2019), but was established for the coloured community, whereas CPUT was not attached to any institution. On inception, UWC offered teacher training education, and training for civil service designed to serve a coloured community, according to the university website. UWC only gained its university status in 1970. The new status permitted the institution to award its own degrees and diplomas. According to UWC Online (2019) the appointment of the first ‘black’ rector, Prof. Richard van der Ross, followed in 1975. I have opted to add inverted commas on black, to emphasise that sometimes lines become blurred in relation to racial demographic classifications. For instance, UWC Online (2019) defines Prof. Van der Ross as black, and the late Prof. Van der Ross on the other hand, disputed being characterised as black. In an article written by Morris (2015), Prof. Van der Ross blatantly declared that he knew *who* and *what* he was, and that it was not black. Prof. Van der Ross said, “I am coloured, and I will say it and sing it and talk it” (Morris, 2015). From this therefore, I suppose in its struggle to be politically correct, the university might be a little disingenuous thus avoiding to point at its exclusion policies prior to 1987. I do not believe UWC should be discomfited of this, because the apartheid legislation forced the hand of every institution to segregate. Besides, I sometimes find the racial classifications being the principal reason we find ourselves still discussing equity and redress 25 years after our democracy. Carr (2016:58) sums it up well when he states “With the introduction of DNA analysis and other scientific measures, it can now be acknowledged that racial purity is a myth. All people, regardless of racial origin, have the same four blood types (A, B, AB, and O) and largely share similar genetic traits”.

That being said, my contention is the journey of becoming at UWC seems to have begun in 1987, a few years after UWC was granted autonomy on the same terms as a white university, and

after Professor Jakes Gerwel became the UWC rector. According to UWC Online (2019), Prof. Gerwel actively introduced the transformation agenda of the time, thus aligning the university to the mass democratic movement, and openly engaging social issues. UWC also introduced an ‘open’ admissions policy, which provided access to African students as well. And in present times, UWC continues to draw its major pool of students from historically disadvantaged communities, namely coloured and African communities, with the minority being white students, mostly found in the dentistry department, South African and foreign students. UWC has however also broadened its footprint to other African countries, as stated on UWC Online (2019), “UWC is privileged to host students from numerous nationalities in a variety of programmes”. In the study, this is one part where I saw the Achilles heel of UWC, as it tends to make UWC more focused on international recognition, rather than the promotion of national need, namely equity and redress. I will discuss this extensively later in the chapter.

5.3.4 Stellenbosch University (SU)

The history of SU dates as far back as the 17th century (SU Online, 2019). The institution became a fully-fledged university only in 1918, after the adoption of the University Act in 1916 by the Union of South Africa Parliament. SU Online (2019) gives an account of progression as the institution evolved. The SU website states that in the early years of the establishment of SU, the institution had a cohort of 503 white students and 40 lecturing staff. When we advance to 2018, the institution had reached a student corps of 31 765 of multiple races (including more than 3 000 foreign students), a lecturing staff complement of 1 091 academic personnel (lecturers) and 2 363 non-academic personnel (SU Online, 2019). Despite all these developments, SU is somewhat still condemned for having participated in the establishment of apartheid, because of Dr Hendrik Verwoerd, who was a SU alumnus, and who stands blamed for apartheid, and whose name was held in esteem for years at SU until 27 May the 2015 when a plaque commemorating his legacy to South Africa was removed. This day may never had happened had it not been for 2015-2017 students unrests that rejected all relics that perpetuated inequality and racial exclusions. In recent years the university website explains that SU is actively transforming itself, which is actually an improvement thus if we are to look at the developed policies that are focussed on redress the injustices of the past.

On the other hand, although the restoration process is in progress, inclusion of black students at SU is slow. For instance, SU enrolment in 2018 was 58.1% white, 20.1% African black, 18.1% coloured, 3.1% Indian and 0.2% Asian. In terms of home language, 37.9% were Afrikaans and 47.8% English speaking, while 10.8% indicated other official South African languages to be their home languages, and 4.1% other (international) languages (SU Online, 2019). From these figures therefore, 10.8% of the students in 2018 seemed to have been black South Africans, as in the tabulated data presented by the institution on the website. This percentage represents the number of students who indicated black South African home languages as their home languages. The assumption can then be that the 9.3% from the 20.1% black students may be black international students. If my assumption is accurate, the question then would be it is fair to increase the number of black students at this university with international students, especially if the institution claims to be attempting to redress past injustices, and the commitment to improve the diversity of the student and staff complement to reflect the composition of the South African society as stipulated on the SU website (SU Online, 2019).

Now that I have given a brief overview, below I attempt to answer the research questions, while referencing some of the aspects of histories of these universities.

5.4 Examining how the four public universities in the Western Cape envision their roles in relation to engendering social justice.

In my endeavour to ascertain how the institutions define their roles in engendering social justice, I examined the vision and mission statements of all four institutions under study. I chose to examine the vision and mission statements of the institutions, because these documents seem to spell out the belief systems of the universities. I explored the question, employing Rancière's (1991), and Freire's (1985) outlooks on democracy and emancipation in education as lenses to evaluate institutional culture at these institutions. I also refer to the WPPSET, and Young's (2011) social connection model, and Young's (1990) distributive justice as lenses, and as a measure to contextualise the outcome of social justice in the state of becoming.

The White Paper for Post-school Education and Training framework describes social justice as an "equitable access by all sections of the population to quality education" (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:5). My extrapolation of this assertion is that if HE

institutions under study want to be viewed as champions of social justice, their policies would reflect systems that yield satisfactory inclusion outcomes. For example, Young (2011:135) states, “people have obligations of justice only to other people with whom they live together under a common constitution, or whom they recognise as belonging to the same nation as themselves”. Through this assertion Young (2011) suggests that mankind is predisposed to feel responsibility towards each other, and therefore an objective form of social justice advocacy means policymakers need to feel some form of responsibility toward those who need support. Young (2011:135) goes on to say if the needy are fellow countrymen, the obligation should quadruple, because nationality and constitution ought to evoke allegiance to the other. From this perceptive, therefore, my contention is that policymakers from universities ought to act responsibly towards the plight of black students from poor schools, because their challenges are not self-imposed, but a legacy of apartheid. For instance, black students from poor schools come from a legacy of deprivation, as in the apartheid era funding favoured white schools, followed by Indian schools, and then coloured schools. The least funded were black schools. Even after 1994, the legacy of privilege continued for a while, and this placed many of these schools ahead, and during this time black schools worked with measly resources. Supporting this statement is Nwaila (1997:11) who reflects the expenditure on education per capita as below.

South African Government's per capita expenditure on education since 1953

Table 1.

Year	White	Indian	Coloured	African
1953–54	R128	R40	R40	R17
1969–70	R288	R81	R73	R17
1975–76	R591	R190	R140	R42
1977–78	R657	R276	R185	R54
1980–81	R913	R513	R253	R121
1982–83	R1 211	R711	R498	R146
1995	R5 400	R4 600	R3 700	R2 184

It is from this context that I argue that universities ought to make an attempt to understand that the remnants of the above disparities exist, and may take long to stabilise, as the financial struggles are still a reality for many African schools. Poor schools struggle with resources, and

this has a detrimental effect on learners who attend these schools. The learners' progression to HE becomes affected too, as the students' socio-economic backgrounds and the schooling encounter are or were disabling. To respond in a manner that shows empathy and an understanding towards the students' need therefore, universities under study at least should try to identify features within their institutional cultures that are deep-rooted on institutionalised exclusion to elevate students from poor schools, instead of excluding them. By virtue of the fact that these students remain in their seemingly dysfunctional system, shows that they have no other option except to remain where they are, which emphasises the fact that these students need help to get ahead. On the other hand, as much as the expenditure per capita statistics that I have used above validates my interpretations of the status quo in education at large, I however do not suggest that higher education institutions should be held liable for injustices of the past, but that the policymakers at the institutions ought to think innovatively about ensuring social justice at their institutions. The degree of change in this instance can be measured against models they use for equity and redress.

The Socratic method of questioning may be a point of departure to drive the process. The questions to ask ought to go along the following lines. Must all academic developments follow global trends? Is the South African situation similar to other global universities? These questions may possibly drive policymakers to reflect logically so as to determine the rationality of the thought process of new policies, especially if the bigger picture is to plot an unbiased present and future South African university system, that is decisive for the improvement of the dilemma of students for poor schools.

Rancière (1991:105) explains the culture of education as intrinsically linked to some form of dominion. Rancière (1991) therefore suggests questioning the status quo, and he says:

It's not enough for inequality to be respected; it wants to be believed and loved. It wants to be explicated. Every institution is an explication in social act, a dramatization of inequality. Its principle is and always will be antithetical to that of a method based on equality and the refusal of explications.

With this Rancière states that if institutions want to undermine inequality to ensure a level democracy and emancipation, their institutional structures need to be deliberate towards pulling

individuals out from “the swamp of ignorance” (Freire, 1985). The emphasis in this regard is on the creation of structures that display a complete move from the culture of repressiveness to emancipation.

Freire (1985:48) reiterates Rancière’s (1991) explication towards the emancipation sentiment, and goes on to say that in an attempt to engender social justice, the priority should be to acknowledge, “[t]he oppressed are not marginal, are not *men* living ‘outside’ society. They have always been inside – inside the structure, which made them ‘beings for others’.” Freire (1985) also declares that when policymakers plan for the mitigation of issues of social justice, the solution should not be to ‘integrate’ the oppressed into the structure of oppression, but to transform the structures so that the oppressed can eventually become ‘being for themselves’. As I justify the necessity of social justice in HE according to Rancière’s (1991) and Freire’s (1985) perspectives, I want to refer to Young (2011:38):

The matters of social justice, however, concern whether the background conditions of people’s actions are fair, whether it is fair that whole categories of persons have vastly wider option and opportunities that some people have is the ability, through the way institutions operate, to dominate or exploit others, or benefit from their domination and exploitation.

My contention from this quotation is an attempt to develop equitable structures in HE. It means new pathways to disrupt the inequities that allow some to dominate the systems, and kick out others. Inequitable settings are still embedded in the present socio-economic dynamics of South Africa, and affect HE heavily. Therefore, to ensure social justice, institutions in my study ought to reimagine their structures to ensure that they are accommodative to all.

From this outlook therefore, in my attempt to respond to the questions in this subsection, my focus has been to find out whether there is some form of acknowledgement of the existence of disparities when mediating challenges facing African students from ill-resourced schools in gaining access to HE, and if not, are the institutions open to finding the middle ground which may relax the rigid structures of the institutions?

5.4.1 Examining whether the strategic objectives (visions and mission statements) of the four universities under study tolerates diversity.

5.4.1.1 CPUT

On the surface CPUT seems inclusive as the university has black African students in the majority. However, when one investigates the university vision and mission statement further, it can be argued that issues of social justice are not made a focal point. My argument is drawn from the students' 2018 statistics sitting at 66.9%, which seems to be like a ballpark as since 2007 black students were around 62.8% (CPUT Online, 2019). The other university practices that seems not to be tolerant of diversity at CPUT is the CPUT language policy, which discounts the existence of the university's biggest consumer group by taking long to develop isiXhosa as an academic language. Developing isiXhosa appeared to have been part of the CPUT Language Implementation Plan 2012-2016 (LIP, CPUT Online, 2019). The idea of CPUT not having developed an African language to be academic language, makes CPUT seems to have a limited interpretation of inclusion, which can be interpreted as some form of internal exclusion. Young (2000:53) suggests an explication of internal processes that seems ambiguous, even when systems are inclusive to circumvent exclusion. Young (2000:53) says, "Less noticed are those form of exclusion that sometimes occur even when individuals and groups are nominally included in the discussion and decision-making process". Young (2000) maintains that exclusions are hard to pinpoint, if systems are externally inclusive. For instance, in Chapter 1 I aligned access to equitable admissions processes, collegial financial aid structures, and equitable language structures, and programmes that can ensure throughput. So far, CPUT seems to succeed in externally including black students from poor schools, since the university statistics reflect that black students are in the majority. At the same time, the university data insinuate that the language policy is an exclusionary feature, since there is a delay in the general introduction of a third academic language (an African language). Only certain departments, such as the Architectural Department, have tried to introduce isiXhosa, as the language is used for glossary purposes (CPUT Online, 2019).

In addition, after my analysis of the vision of CPUT, which reads, "[t]o be at the heart of technology education and innovation in Africa" (CPUT Online, 2019) there is another conflict

within the vision, which demonstrates the strategic view of CPUT as more concentrated on gaining international recognition, while less, if not none, is said about the promotion of the national agenda, which states “Each university will have a clear mission that sets out its unique contribution towards knowledge production and national development” (National Development Plan, 2030:317). The national agenda includes strengthening of equity, social justice and democracy.

In retrospect, one can also argue that the pursuit of international recognition may mean the university policymakers have a difficult task, which makes them prioritise international standards as the trends in education have predetermined the futures of universities. Somehow, this presents itself as if CPUT is deliberately overlooking national needs, because they may get a substantial pool of students from the other parts of Africa, who are black, and since this seems to be their core goal. This I see as a setback that might be compounding social justice issues at CPUT, because black students from other parts of Africa may be part of the 66.9% that depicts black students; hence, the reluctance of the general acceptance of IsiXhosa.

As much as my argument above illustrates the seeming neglect of social justice issues at CPUT, I however also want to acknowledge that the strategic themes stipulated in the vision and mission statement, such as working towards being at the helm of technology in Africa, and wanting to adapt the curriculum to suit global standards, are not mundane issues, since world economies have become so interdependent, and South Africa got caught up in this interdependence; hence, the introduction of GEAR in 1996, while still attempting to transform the harm created by the apartheid system. Being a global player seems to have been disadvantageous for South Africa, because this has widened the gap between the rich and poor, if we look at the number of students who require financial aid to get to HE. Then again, the world is changing, so universities also ought to think of a seismic revolution to disrupt hostile policies and processes so as to allow poor students upward mobility.

For example, CPUT has 66.9% black students, but there is no language that embraces black students like English and Afrikaans do to and for English- and Afrikaans-speaking students, yet isiXhosa is the second most spoken language at 24.7% of the population, compared to 49.7% of Afrikaans-speakers in the Western Cape (Stats SA Online, 2019). On the other hand, if English,

which is the least spoken in the Western Cape averaging at 20.3%, is regarded as the most important part of academic life, since it enjoys the status of teaching and learning, why are Afrikaans-speaking students afforded the privilege to write assignments in their mother tongue, when black students have no choice but to write assignments only in English? A just practice should be to give the same concession to black students, even if black students do not see the need. Given the apartheid history of the country, HE should endeavour to promote equity, social justice and democracy (National Development, 2030:318). In essence, there is no justification for excluding a third language if the aim is to redress imbalances of the past, and “to meet the needs of a democratic society and overcome unfair discrimination” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013:1).

With these finding therefore, I am proposing an ethics of care as a paradigm in which the status quo could be disrupted. Also, as I have indicated in the sub-sections above, CPUT has a large majority of African students on its books; the acknowledgement of black students’ presence at CPUT by introducing a third academic language would mean the institution is showing an aspect of caring towards black students. Noddings (2003:18) says caring is actuality of the other. This suggests even if black students were not in the majority, but by virtue of having black students studying at CPUT, surely there should be some form of recognition, so that the black students can also feel accepted, instead of being treated as if they are invisible, and assimilated into discriminatory institutional culture. In addition, if a third official language were to be introduced, whether the students will use it or not, the gesture would demonstrate that the university is prepared to decolonise an exclusive institutional culture. In essence, my contention is transformation processes should not be left to departmental decision-making as it seems to have been at CPUT, but should be a homogeneous practice at the university.

5.4.1.2 University of Cape Town

Although the vision and mission statements of UCT define the institution as inclusive and equitable, and effecting the national transformation agenda to engender social justice (UCT Online, 2019) there are indicators that suggest a paradox in the vision and mission statements. For example, the vision states:

UCT is an inclusive and engaged research-intensive African university that inspires creativity through outstanding achievements in learning, discovery and citizenship; enhancing the lives of its students and staff, advancing a more equitable and sustainable social order and influencing the global higher education landscape” (UCT Online, 2019).

The 2015–2017 students’ protest actions #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall respectively presented discordance between the university perception of itself, and the students’ perceptions. Also, when we look at assertions stipulated in the vision, one wonders at what point would the university increase its transformation capacity to an extent that students from poor schools, not just fragments of students from poor schools, can also benefit, since the mission statement of the institution does mention that UCT intends to “actively advance the pace of transformation within the university and beyond, nurturing an inclusive institutional culture which embraces diversity” (UCT Online, 2019).

While the mission of UCT presents it as an institution that has the doors of learning wide open, UCT seems to have a predilection for affluent students, and that is quite worrisome. This I will discuss further, as later in the sub-section it appears in the admissions policy that the institution is interested in the recruitment of high achievers, probably because that is the only way the institution can be able to influence the global landscape. It is from these emerging nuances that I have committed myself in continuous discourse surrounding the exclusion of students from poor schools. In this regard, my argument is that some students fail to attain the status of affluence, because they are financially disadvantaged. If given financial assistance and academic support, students’ performance tend improve.

In my previous position, I worked as a bursary fund administrator. At inception, I was tasked to find a way that would set the company I worked for apart from other bursary funders. Because of my interest in the inclusion of poor students, especially since I come from poor schools myself, and I somewhat understand the plight of the students under study, I suggested during the development phase of the bursary fund policy, that the company focus on the students’ ability to enter university, instead of high marks. The majority of the students we funded were average students, but they soared out as soon as they received bursaries. Institutions such as UCT ought also to make it part of their mission to grant average students opportunities to study there, especially those who apply for admissions and have passed with degree endorsement. The

students should be granted positions in the degrees of their choice, instead of being relegated to social science. I also refer to this in later sub-sections.

5.4.1.3 University of the Western Cape

Through the university website, I found that UWC has almost a similar historical background to CPUT, thus the history of disadvantage of the institutions, and their provision for a historically subjugated group. The only difference is that UWC does not seem to assume that the history of the institutions absolves them from having to establish programmes for social justice. UWC seems to understand that it also has to play its part in transformation that is if we are to go by the statements found in the mission statement of the university:

[T]he University of the Western Cape is a national university, alert to its African and international context as it strives to be a place of quality, a place to grow. It is committed to excellence in teaching, learning and research, to nurturing the cultural diversity of South Africa, and to responding in critical and creative ways to the needs of a society in transition (UWC Online 2019).

What seems like a blemish, is the aspiration of the university for global recognition as well, and as stated, “UWC aims to design [a] curricular and research programmes appropriate to its southern African context, and further global perspectives among its staff and students, thereby strengthening intellectual life and contributing to South Africa's reintegration in the world community” (UWC Online, 2019). The challenge in this regard is that this feat may come at the expense of students from poor schools that might end up being excluded.

I have an anecdote from my experience as an honours student at UWC. During that period I found that most lecturers treated international students (from other parts of Africa) like demigods, probably to make them interested in studying at UWC till they reach their PhD studies, thus nourishing their global ambition, or maybe to make the international students feel welcomed. The lecturers in question would know their reason better. In addition, the international students were validated at every opportunity during lectures, which made some of us feel invisible. It seemed as if there was a stratified system attached to the order of importance. We had coloured students first, then foreign students, then South African black students. This I am saying from another personal experience, still as a registered student at UWC. In one of my lectures, Curriculum and Pedagogy, the lecturer would start the lesson in English, and should one

student ask for some clarity in Afrikaans, the lecture would completely change to an Afrikaans lecture. To top it all, Afrikaans-speaking students were allowed to write their assignments in Afrikaans, African students were expected to sink or swim. I still believe, even when writing this dissertation, had I wrote it in IsiXhosa, I would have to some extent expressed myself better. Nevertheless, in the Curriculum and Pedagogy module, I kept getting the lowest marks ever – as a matter of fact this is the only module I obtained less than 60%. Part of me felt that the lecturer was prejudiced, as our assignments were marked as per the order of our importance in class. Coloured and international students would receive their scripts before ours were even marked. I am not really sure whether the lecturer was conscious that she was perpetuating an inequitable system, but she did. On one occasion when we asked her assistant why we always received our assignments late, she said the lecturer marks alphabetically. What is peculiar, though, is that we had Xhosa-speaking students with surnames that begin with B and C, who were not among those who received their scripts first. Basically, through my experience my contention is there is a contradiction between policy and implementation, which then give way for internal exclusion and external exclusion. The UWC policymakers ought to find a method that would ensure an appropriate system in the implementation of policy.

5.4.1.4 Stellenbosch University

SU seems also to have been working within the national transformation agenda framework, thus I refer to two of the strategic priorities of SU: “seeking to broaden access, and societal impact” (US Online, 2019). What may seem problematic in this situation is change seems to be taking place at a slow pace, especially since South Africa became a democracy in 1994, and SU keeps extending their diversity strategy. The university is currently on Vision 2040 strategy. One wonders how long will it take for SU eventually to transform, although one still acknowledges the exclusive culture at SU as an established institution, since it has been around for almost three centuries.

Another challenge within the vision and mission statement is the SU ‘canonised’ determination to sustain excellence as a priority strategy. In my previous study, I understood this as an approach to rebuff students from poor schools (Ngwenya, 2014:79). Even presently gaining access to SU may prove a long shot for students from poor schools, as their schooling encounters

do not seem to improve. Nevertheless, the SU vision does seem to present hopefulness, in that the primary attribute of the university is to ensure that SU becomes “a place of discovery and excellence where both staff and students are thought leaders in advancing knowledge in the service of all stakeholders” (US Online, 2019), even though there is still a culture of exclusion at the university. For instance, in a “Transformation and language at SU” discussion in Paarl on 19 September 2017, the Vice Chancellor of SU mentioned that SU is about “accommodating everyone in the context of our shared South African identity”, while referring to English and Afrikaans. This reference was inconsiderate, since there are black students, whether they are 10.3% or not, who may have pursue their studies in English, because there never is or was a choice for them, except to be assimilated into the dominant cultures at their universities.

5.4.1.4 Summary

To give a brief account of my assessment of this question, I would say the manner by which the institutions in my study understand their roles in the promotion of social justice, is ironic. On the one hand, I found that the UWC, UCT and SU policymakers see their universities as part of the bigger plan with regard to issues of social justice, while on the other hand; global imperatives seem to trump the national agenda. Also, all three institutions seem to want to grant access to all students notwithstanding their socio-economic backgrounds, even though their priorities seem to be in conflict with their aspirations, since all three continuously rationalise their promotion of academic excellence. This therefore seems to suggest that universities are conflicted, since they seem to want to engender social justice, while also wanting to be influential on global platforms. From my point of view, the dilemma of the three universities is the burden of accommodating a large pool of students from poor schools, which may affect the global reputations of these universities.

CPUT, on the other hand, has not said much on the issue of social justice. This seemingly detached outlook may suggest that CPUT does not recognise that by virtue of drawing its student corps from the historically disadvantaged communities, more so the African community, it has an obligation to acknowledge its major stakeholder by probably endorsing a regional African language as an academic language, thus taking it to the level of the dominant languages at the institution, and to promote multiculturalism. This would mean a move from catering only for

Afrikaans- and English-speaking coloured students, as well as English and Afrikaans white students, especially since CPUT is a young institution, established only in 2005. In a way, my contention is that the CPUT culture needs to reflect democracy, instead of the legacy of apartheid, as it now seems.

From the above assertions therefore it is sufficient for me to say that the four universities do not have well-defined roles as far as social justice issues are concerned. Instead, the university cultures of all four institutions still seem to display reluctance towards the empowerment of the other. This therefore suggests that the university cultures are areas that would need to be disrupted.

When endeavouring to respond to the next question, I will examine the policy documents (admissions, financial aid, and equity) of the universities to investigate further how the institutions have reimagined their processes to accommodate students from poor schools who seem relentlessly disempowered by their schooling encounters, if the university cultures are also still alienating.

5.4.2 Examining the strategies that public universities in the Western Cape have in place to ensure that even students from ill-resourced schools gain access to HE

Young (1990:16) declares that in the dissemination of social justice, “the concept of domination and oppression, rather than the concept of distribution, should be the starting point for a conception of social justice”. On the basis of this citation, in my analysis of the text relating to this question, instead of looking at how the universities have structured their new policy framework, I have identified subjugating features within the newly transformed admissions policies of the universities as this could possibly point at factors that are likely to exclude students from ill-resourced schools. The idea behind this technique is an attempt to highlight areas where disruption needs to take place.

5.4.2.1 Cape Peninsula University of Technology

I have identified three overwhelming characteristics within the CPUT admissions policies. My perception is that these are likely to prevent a vast majority of African students from ill-resourced schools from gaining access to this institution. The factors in question are the online

application process, upfront payment, and the issue of language. For instance, according to the university website, all prospective candidates at CPUT need to apply online, save for the international students, recognition of prior learning candidates, and those with non-South African school-leaving qualifications. This process seems absurdly exclusive, because there is a substantial number of students who attend ill-resourced schools, and rural schools where there are limited resources. The students from these schools may not have the luxury of owning the required infrastructure to apply from, and/or may not have expertise to operate the infrastructure if available. An argument that often refutes the dichotomy in socio-economic nuances of South Africa, is the assumption that all students have cell phones, thus overlooking that not every student enjoys such luxury, even in 2019. Besides, even to operate a cell phone, students need to have available resources such as the Internet, which costs money. Making the online application process compulsory, seems like some form of exclusion of students who do not have access to the Internet, and a large majority of this student cohort comes from ill-resourced schools, and are mostly black students. On the other hand, this can be seen as a ploy to push students from ill-resourced schools towards TVETs.

Additionally, that all students need to pay a deposit of R1 750.00 within two weeks of confirmation of acceptance from CPUT, seems rather constraining for financially needy students, as they may end up losing out if they do not have funds at hand to reserve places for themselves. Even if the students may have applied for bursaries, they can still lose out, as most bursaries pay only when the students have been registered. From this aspect, I can only deduce that CPUT seems to prefer financially affluent students, thus perpetuating the Platonist stereotype that higher education is exclusive and a privilege (Noddings, 1998:12). Although to an extent there is an enabling factor at most universities, including CPUT, such as the availability of bursaries, this cannot be regarded as a cast-iron certainty, as most bursaries choose specific students, and in many instances bursary applicants are expected to be academically superior to others. This then becomes another problem for students who come from schools that are not academically enabling. The saving grace for students from ill-resourced schools is often NSFAS, which provides loans and bursaries to students, now that there are free education opportunities for working-class students. The disadvantage with NSFAS is that there are a lot of barrier before one gets to be considered (How to apply, NSFAS Online 2019). Therefore, one can only argue that

post-schools studies seem to be continuously elusive for African students from ill-resourced schools.

Finally, in the previous question I reasoned that not having a language that the majority of students can identify with at CPUT, seems to present itself as some form of domination, as the absence of it seems to incapacitate students from ill-resourced schools, since for many English is their second language. Bearing in mind that at CPUT English is the language of teaching and learning, and often not the language of the students in my study. These students can express themselves better in their own languages, even when their Admissions Point Scores (APS) are favourable. This form of pressure can be dislocated through the introduction of IsiXhosa on an equal footing as English and Afrikaans, whether the students choose to use IsiXhosa for assignments or not, and considering that students are allowed to write assignments in Afrikaans. The introduction of IsiXhosa as a third language at CPUT, can be viewed as a mechanism to include African students to curb the institutional symbolic violence.

5.4.2.2 University of Cape Town

At UCT I found that a lot has changed, but the more things change there more they remain the same. For instance, the admission requirements for all courses presented at UCT, as well as general admission information, and qualification structures seem to have been reimagined, but established traditions such as academic excellence, which has been the gate-keeping strategy of this institution, is still encased within the reimagined processes, as it was in the previous admissions requirements (Ngwenya, 2014:52). The afflicting part within the new developments is that prospective African students from ill-resourced schools may become encouraged to apply for admissions at UCT when they discover that the disadvantage factor that UCT has adopted to aid students from ill-resourced schools can improve chances of the one applying for admission. The downside of this process is that even if the Weighted Point Score (WPS), which defines disadvantage, is added to the Faculty Point Score (FPS), it does not improve anyone's chances, since most FPS score requirements are between 600 and 1000 when combined with the NBT scores. It does not matter, even if a student were to attain 6 4s ratings plus the WPS; the student's score would not make him or her eligible for a place at UCT. If the student does get admitted to UCT, he or she would likely end up studying Social Sciences or BA. Not that there is something

wrong with these courses, but that they seem to be the only options for students from ill-resourced schools, who might end up with scores between 350 and 400. So the question is what is more important to the student, whether to study at UCT because of its reputation, or get to a university that would accept the student in their 47 of 1953 practices, where African students' professions were limited to nursing or teaching, and/or policeman [or women], or is it that UCT just does not have a room for average students.

5.4.2.3 University of the Western Cape

The fundamental aspect of the UWC admissions policy is not only the institutional passion with international recognition, but UWC seems to emulate the historically advantaged institutions, by showing interest in the recruitment of academically affluent students. To support this assertion, I have drawn from the mission statement of UWC, which states that in their recruitment of students they are not willing to compromise on the standards of excellence required to obtain certificates, diplomas or degrees. This means, as much as the general admission requirement is a National Senior Certificate (NSC) with an achievement rating of 4, and/or the point score of 20 credits at the university, chosen from four subjects other than Mathematics or Mathematics Literacy, English and Life Orientation, there is a likelihood that students from ill-resourced schools, many of whom are African, may not be accepted since they may not meet the criteria.

Besides, since these students are competing on the same level with other students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds, who may be a little advantaged, as some are English First Language speakers, the chances of African students from ill-resourced schools seem rather limited, as the other students may come out rather stronger than them. After having gone through the faculty requirements, I learnt that if African students from ill-resourced schools do manage to be accepted at UWC, they are likely to end up in the Faculty of Arts in the majority, as the Arts seems reachable to these students. The requirements of other faculties can sometimes deter students.

Also, in my analysis of the UWC admissions policy, I have discovered that the NBT scores do not help in improving the students' chances of gaining access to UWC. The university states that the NBT test help in the assessment of competence of the applicant in studying at university. The scores help a student get an early provisional offer of admission if he or she performs well on the

tests, and improve the chances of attaining an entrance scholarship, and promotion to the front of the queue if the student was on a waiting list. With all these developments, one wonders whether UWC is open to the admission of African students from ill-resourced schools.

5.4.2.4 Stellenbosch University

In the subsection 5.3.4, I cited the broadening of access as one of the strategic priorities of SU. After having gone through the admissions policy of SU, I discovered that SU has continuously been attempting to redress established imbalances at the university. However, I have also discovered that some of the factors that were excluding at SU in the past, such as faculties determining admissions criteria, and the institution still admitting academically excellent students, still form the integral part of the newly revised admissions policy. This suggests that the minimum admissions requirements at this university do not help students to gain access to the university, as faculty point scores are far above what many students from ill-resourced schools can present. It is also rather worrying that faculties and the Rector's management team are the ones to determine diversity targets in terms of race and socio-economic status. One wonders to what end are these targets controlled, and whether the slow pace in diversifying SU will ever be improved from the 10.3% black students in the 2019 enrolment.

5.4.2.5 Summary

In my analysis of the admissions policies of the four institutions in my study, I discovered that the processes put in place by the four institutions to aid students from ill-resourced schools gain access to university education are not really amiable to black students from poor schools. Instead, these measures seem to disadvantage the students even further, since the processes at the institutions seem to address disadvantage generally. Relatively speaking, it seems imprudent to place the level of disadvantage of black, coloured and Indian students generically on a par, as their schooling encounters are not the same. The schooling encounters were not the same in the apartheid era, because legislation promoted disparity in terms of resources, as well as what was taught at school, which made the coloured and Indian students better off, especially since they also have a language advantage. The disparity in the present encounters is accentuated by the socio-economic positions. For instance, African students from ill-resourced schools mostly attend schools that were provisioned through The Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953. Ocampo

(2004) says Bantu Education directly affected the content of learning by preventing access to further education, which affected the education potential of black students. The schools that most African students attend are still under resourced; the neighbourhoods where these schools are located, are still low-income neighbourhoods, which are becoming poorer by the day, since the unemployment rate has been on the rise. This therefore suggests that by virtue of being in poorly resourced schools, students are by proxy academically and financially disadvantaged. No matter how hard these schools try, they cannot catch up with well-resourced schools, or schools that inherited an enabling infrastructure such as most former Model C schools. The argument I am raising therefore, is institutions need to understand that their processes still do not seem to recognise the present nuances within the level of disadvantage; hence, my contention for an ethics of care.

5.4.3 Examining the extent through which the ethics of care is lacking from university's inclusion strategies

Noddings, one of the feminist originators of an ethics of care, defines ethical caring as a derivative of ontological relations such as family setting relations, where a mother would care for a child. She explains that the caring process is asymmetrical, but reciprocal, as it consists of a carer, and the one who is cared for (Noddings, 2003). The asymmetry depicts determinative positions of influence, and an example of reciprocity can be illustrated through the reaction that the mother may get from a child whom she cares for, which may be endearing and satisfying.

To interpret this type of relationship in an institutional setting with regard to this study, I would say naturally ontological relations do take place at institutions of learning, and they simulate family settings relations since the scholarship part of institutions of learning consists of lecturers that facilitate learning, and students that need coaching till they attain their qualifications. Taking from my experience as a student as well, although an adult learner, I would say that my promoter inspires and encourages me, and the reciprocity would then be demonstrated through the level of understanding of concepts I would present after our interaction. When I do well, he is satisfied. This therefore means he imparts the knowledge, and in return I demonstrate what I have learnt, which should be satisfying for him.

On the other hand, before the students get to meet lecturers, they go through administrative processes such as applying for admissions, and bursaries applications, and every other administrative hoop that the students have to go through. My contention is that most of the challenges arise during the administrative process before the caring relationship begins, because the lecturer-student relationship still seems to be in full-strength in most institutions. It is from this concept that I align myself to Noddings (2013:xiv), where she states that we need to transform processes that block caring relations to take place. Noddings (2013) says:

Today in a world shaken by the violence of nations and groups whose acts are “justified” by the principles they espouse, an ethic of care is even more important and ultimately reasonable. Our efforts should be directed to transforming the conditions that make caring difficult or impossible.

Basically, if we take Nodding’s (2013) contention into cognisance, university policies and procedures could be adapted to show altruism and benevolence. The policies and procedures would also carry an emotional, and motivational consciousness. Slote (2007:12) concurs and interprets Noddings’ (2003) view, by stating that, when caring drives processes, it displaces ordinary self-interest, and replaces it with unselfish concern towards an individual who needs care. When one extrapolates the essence of these perceptions, one would argue that for policies to be considered as having an ethics of care, altruism and benevolence should drive processes.

When looking back at the discourse I presented on the four institutions in my study, I would say regarding the question of how the institutions describe their roles in engendering social justice, I found the vision and mission statements conflicted, and lacking an ethics of care. Although some institutions talk about issues of social justice, they also are interested in finding and cementing their positions on global academic platforms. For instance, when one navigates the websites of the two historically advantaged institutions under study, the most prominent features are those that promote consumerism. At UCT the first aspect on the drop-down menu is Explore UCT, and on perusal one sees awards and achievements first, which laud all academics attached to the institution, and thus technically lauding the institutions itself. At SU, what is communicated is if students were to study at SU, they would be associated with a high-quality institution that is ranked amongst the elite institutions in the world. The conflict in this regard is that the institutions seem so self-absorbed about what they want to achieve or who they are, and this can make institutions prejudiced towards students who may not possess the qualities the institutions

need to get ahead, especially since, if students are from ill-resourced schools, their ‘excellence’ often pale in comparison to students from affluent schools. This outlook is unerringly what my study suggested to disrupt, since institutions seem to be at odds with themselves, as their policymakers seem to present the universities as businesses.

The White Paper for Post-school Education and Training (Department of Education, 2013:30) explains the function of universities as systematic centres established to educate, and to provide people with skills for the labour market, encourage scholarship, and the generation of new knowledge through their curricula. It is further stated that universities are there to provide opportunities for social mobility, and strengthen social justice and democracy, thus helping to overcome the inequities inherited from our apartheid past. Looking at the four institutions with these assertions in mind, the mission statements of the four institutions seem to be coming from a subjective point of view, thus technically not having had created a path for students from ill-resourced schools.

In the question that explored strategies that the four institutions have in place to accommodate students from poor schools, I found that the strategies are also lacking in an ethics of care, because most of the institutions admissions are target driven. This means that the institutions will continuously create arbitrary measures that are not based on fairness, particularly since they are not keen on students without elitist potential. Take, for instance, the point system adopted by UCT, UWC and SU. As I pointed out, it does not seem to help anyone who comes with 4 ratings. At CPUT, where the students are expected to pay upfront, it may also be a way to close out poor students.

The four institutions seem to be attempting to address the equity and access problems, but their current systems are not helping, as the approach seems to be the integration of the students into old systems; hence, my argument for disruption.

5.5 Conclusion

Ensuing from my assessment of the policy framework of the universities in my study, I have reached the conclusion that the four institutions are yet to find substantive practices that can ensure a complete transformation of their systems. I have argued for disruption through an ethics

of care. In this chapter, I have also argued that the apartheid status quo that preserved HE as a realm for affluence still exist. An authentic disruption model in the case of my study, would ideally meet the needs of all those who are yearning for HE, notwithstanding their socio-economic status.

Considering that after 1994 there has been an increase of institutional massification, where HE institutions have been besieged by a flood of students from low socio-economic income who are yearning for HE encounters, one would think that the institutions would acknowledge that the underperformance of students from poor schools is the result of the previous system, rather than their lack of potential. Instead, I find the manner in which they have addressed disadvantage a ruse, since it does not open the doors of HE.

It is somewhat disheartening for me to accept that the growth of a black middle class may possibly have led to the neglect of poor students, as the institutions in my study meet their diversity targets by means of the black middle class students. After that, these institutions seem to look no further, and sadly, this is often accepted as some form of inclusion. It is for these reasons that I dare to say that our institutions have stopped seeing education as a social service with a success-enabling end. Instead, HE is seen as a money-making function. Thus, if we are to go by the content-based forms of disruption, such as e-learning, or distance learning, the institutions are introducing, coupled with institutions wanting to be part of the international community. It is from these conceptualisations that in the next chapter I introduce an ethics of care process, by which I envisage the status quo at universities can be disrupted in order to engender social justice.

Chapter 6

AN ETHICS OF CARE TRANSFORMED AS AN UNORTHODOX PARADIGM SUITABLE TO DISRUPT EXTERNAL EXCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has revealed a systematic exclusion of black students from poor schools. The HE institutions in my study have taken steps to transform, following the enactment of the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training of 2013. The chapter illustrated the systematic external exclusion of students as a covert practice, which is embedded in the university culture, with some of its manifestation being slightly visible in access testing processes. The paradox within the practices of the HE institutions is the misrepresentation of their recruitment processes that present the university culture as open to all students, notwithstanding their socio-economic standing, while in practice the institutions covertly exclude students they deem to have no potential for HE opportunities, and these students often come from poor schools. I have taken the UCT Vice Chancellor's message to the 2020 aspirants to demonstrate the contradictory messages that students often receive as they attempt to adopt the norms of the groups that successfully manage to change their social position through HE.

The Vice Chancellor's message states:

Ours is a vibrant, multinational and multicultural community, with staff and students from across South Africa, Africa and the rest of the world. Every person has something to contribute to the university's continuing excellence and growth, and our goal is to ensure that everyone feels at home during their time here (Undergraduate Prospectus: UCT Online, 2019).

On the surface, this message seems to give hope to prospective students as it depicts UCT as an institution that embraces students from all walks of life. Then again, within the message come subtle nuances that communicate a different path taken by UCT. This is depicted in the paragraph that reads:

With a proud tradition of academic excellence, UCT is currently the top-rated university in Africa and one of the top-rated universities in the world. As such, we look forward to welcoming talented, motivated students to our university – especially those who have an interest in engaging with the

problems of our society and finding ways to live sustainably within our environment (Undergraduate Prospectus: UCT Online, 2019).

The tone of this paragraph, to an extent leaves one wondering how the university identifies unmotivated. Do students from poor schools also fall under the unmotivated students' category?

Drawing my argument from these inferences, it is sufficient for me to imagine that students from poor schools may likely be excluded by the UCT policy structures as students from poor schools may not possess the proficiency that qualifies them as motivated and talented, probably because their lived experiences pale compared to standards set by this institution. The seeming subjectivity in the Vice Chancellor's message where it states "with a proud tradition of academic excellence" may be interpreted as guided by UCT policy practices, which are likely to lean on the pre democracy practices that promoted structural injustice, especially since the message speaks on university traditions.

Young (2011:xvi) states:

The most helpful concept with which to approach structural injustices is that of shared responsibility. We turn away from the past and toward the future, accepting collectively, the fact as citizens we bear responsibility for monitoring political institutions and ensuring that such structural injustices do not arise within them, or, if they are already there, that they are ameliorated.

When I use Young's (2011) shared responsibility notion as a lens to examine the Vice Chancellor's message, one can argue that the Vice Chancellor's message is rather ambiguous as on one side it spells out the institutional culture that is inclined to deny students from poor schools opportunities to develop and exercise their capabilities, while on the opposite the same message seems to support students whose proficiencies are what the institution requires, and these students might be entering university coming from affluent schools. The Vice Chancellor's message can be loosely interpreted as an endorsement of exclusion principles that are entrenched in the university culture. By the university culture I refer to the manner by which things have been done at this institution, as stated in Van Wyk (2009:332) that "[w]hile academics may not pay much attention to the culture of their institutions in their day-to-day activities, there is an inescapable, pervasive culture that determines how things are done at each institution".

With kind of feature, it can be argued that embedded in the present university culture are components of apartheid culture that excluded black students from gaining access to HE, especially gaining access to historically advantaged institutions, as technically this university still seem predisposed to exclude the same kind of students.

UCT is not unique. Nearly all the institutions in my study tend to make exclusiveness legitimate. The previous chapter has illustrated the statutory entry requirements for university study and access testing as obstacles that are put in place by the universities under study to keep students from poor schools away from HE. This defeats the purpose of having a policy outline that communicates the promotion of democracy, equity and equality (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2013). In an ideal setting, access testing is not flawed, but in the case of HE in South Africa, it is still plagued by the remnants of apartheid, such as having an HE landscape that is still burdened by inequalities that come with a poor socio-economic background, cultural, language and life-experience, access testing places unwarranted pressure on poor students as they live their schooling encounters with limited academic capacity for participation in university education. From these contentions, I argue that access testing is subjective, especially if all students are expected to write the same tests, yet their schooling encounters were not the same. Because of this, it is essential that institutions attempt to disrupt the repressive methods within their systems, especially if they argue to have democratic ideals.

UCT has introduced a redress category from which a three-pronged approach in their admissions processes allows for selection based on marks, performance and aptitude, an account of school and home background, and demographic targets based on an applicant's race is used (UCT Online, 2019), because the UCT FPS still gets in the way of students from poor schools as nearly all faculties have defined FPS. Some faculties have a rather higher FPS, which limits the students from poor schools' choices. As in most cases the marks students from poor schools bring to the selection process, tend to limit the students to the arts and social sciences, as the humanities faculty is somewhat cordial in relation to its FPS requirement.

The paradox in the implementation of this three-pronged system is it seems to be perfect on the surface, which makes it difficult to deny the attempt of the institution to transform, while it can undeniably control the stream of students from poor schools. The manipulation of influx of

students from poor schools refers to the FPS that are high, which means they can either exclude students or include them in courses such as social sciences, which universities keep cordial. From this understanding therefore, transformation at this institution might never effect the desired change. By desired change I am referring to the implementation of processes that can ensure a complete departure from subtle exclusion of students. This seeming concealed exclusion ideology tends to uphold the past, which relates more to the university culture. In Chapter 1, I explained institutional culture through Van Wyk (2009) as general practices at universities, which become students' experiences, which to can either be hostile or cordial. In this case, students from poor schools may experience their university cultures as hostile, because of the processes that make it difficult for them to access HE.

SU is no different to UCT even though its admissions requirements are made to appear genial as they start by pointing out that SU does not use the APS system as in the past. If students attain 50% in their content subjects, that is good enough for SU. Considering the history of exclusion at SU, I would like to believe that students become elated when they read that APS is not necessary. Then the institution introduces the NBT as one of the requirements if one wants to study at SU (SU Online, 2019).

Earlier in the chapter I have defined the NBT as the most hostile system, as it normalises the exclusion of students, and is unfortunately used by all universities in South Africa. The findings in the previous chapter present the NBT as one of those substructures in HE that makes asymmetrical balance customary, particularly since all students are expected to take the tests whether they come from poor schools or affluent schools. The universities on the one hand make the students see the need to take the test, although it subtly pushes others away.

Essentially, the NBTs do not allow any middle ground between success and failure at the universities in my study. The students are either in or out. For example, at CPUT and UWC, through the NBT scores the universities get to decide who they view ready for university against whom they deem not ready. At UCT and SU, if the NBT scores do not give the students quality marks, students are likely to end up studying something they never envisioned in their lives, or perhaps pushed into studying social sciences. I have had conversations with students at the time I worked as a bursary fund administrator, where some students admitted they wanted to study at

the two historically advantaged institutions in my study, so much so that when their APS did not allow them to enter into the desired faculties, (that was before the NBT, but after transformation started in higher education), the students were relayed to social science and arts respectively. The Department of Social Development employs one of the students as a social worker, and the other is a poet and an artist that travels around the world. Yes, the opportunities of studying at the two institutions have unlocked a world of opportunities for the two students, but they stumbled upon their present careers, basically not what they intended for themselves.

These encounters were the experiences of two students who attended former Model C schools. The question I then ask myself is, if former Model C students also experience the university culture as hostile, how much worse can things be for students from poor schools at these institutions? This abject position becomes worse when students fail the NBT. This may suggest that the student might never gain access to the university system, because not all faculties or institutions would be interested in students who had to write the NBT more than once (UCT Online, 2019).

Is there any justice and fairness in this system? Probably not, especially since the previous chapter depicts access testing as subjective, because like most standards set for HE, it allows students from private schools and former Model C schools to flourish, while poor students stumble, which leaves many students from poor schools discouraged, and this often pushes them towards TVET opportunities. Because of these asymmetrical power relations, it becomes easy to interpret the TVET system as a path created for poor students.

The findings in the previous chapter do not only paint access-testing processes as the only feature that overwhelms transformation in higher education. Other dynamics, such as neo-liberal demands for global competitiveness, have been illustrated as predisposed to constrain transformation strategies in higher education, as in their quest for recognition, universities tend inevitably to lean towards students that are apt to aid universities fulfil the criteria of international competitiveness and related efficiency criteria. These aspirations therefore have, to some extent, completely derailed the essential purposes of HE that were attached to the 'New South Africa transformation ideals' such as having to establish universities as platforms to drive social mobility, as well as being platforms that would generate programmes for engendering

social justice (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2013:30). Christensen and Eyring (2011:200) argue that these days most universities have become profit driven as they charge excessive fees probably to attract students that can readily pay their fees, and probably to be able to recruit faculty members who are internationally recognised, and who in turn would conduct scholarly research to make the universities to be measured against the best, or work towards the institution culture of institutions such as Harvard. Christensen and Eyring (2011:200) further state that this desire for prestige is often obscure for average universities as they do not have the means to draw elite students as rich institutions would, which is probably one the reason the historically advantaged institutions in South Africa keep seem reluctant to recruit students from poor schools because they mostly likely do not have the academic prowess of elite students.

Just as the universities are pressured by students' protests to disrupt alienating processes at universities, politics and international efficiency criteria adopted by many South African universities equally place much pressure on the universities. In a way, this then expresses the possibility of universities taking a chance on multitudes of average students from poor schools as slim to none. In some way the South African government also seems unsure about how to salvage the status quo in HE, as the government itself has repositioned its strategy away from the social development policy framework that embraced the RDP, in favour of the GEAR plan. Somehow, the motivation of South African universities for competition is somewhat influenced by public policy that has since been informed by neo-liberal ideologies, which link economics, culture, and people to produce global homogeny.

It is from these interpretations that I advance an ethics-of-care approach as a paradigm that can advance equitable principles in policymaking to engender social justice in HE. To justify this proposition I want to start by mentioning that nearly all institutions in my study seem to be in favour of inclusion and equality in theory, yet I found it hard to interpret the practices at the universities as equitable, since their processes are rather unaccommodating to students from poor schools, except for UCT that has a WPS interposition, although equally impracticable since the FPS still overshadows the WPS when students from poor schools seek access to faculties such as commerce, engineering and built environment, health science, law and science. The faculty that appears affable towards students from poor schools is humanities, more so the performing arts.

This interposition may seem to be a solution, but it does not help when students from poor schools are competing for access to university against their black counterparts who have Model C and private schools encounters, especially if these students were to also evoke their WPS. The scenario may end with universities going no further after they have found their quota from students educated at the former Model C and private schools. I am not saying former Model C students should not use the WPS system, because that would be unfair as some students are fortunate to attend affluent schools, but later go home to their underprivileged neighbourhoods. All I am trying to say is that students from poor schools should also be allowed to be part of HE. Taking the TVET route should be a matter of choice, not an only option if the students want post-school encounters. So, my proposal therefore is that HE institutions ought to look into the ethics of care to disrupt the exclusive nature of their systems.

To expound on the key themes in the ethics of care, and how they can be utilised in the disruption of alienating processes in HE, my concept is presented in three segments. The first segment discusses Kant's (2002) care ethics, using the moral principle as a starting point to juxtapose the views on moral ethics alongside the ethics of care. The second segment focuses on natural caring as in the views of Noddings (2003), Slote (2007) and Held (2006) on the ethics of care. I also introduce concepts from critical theorists that discuss caring and justice. In the third segment, which is my conclusion, I rationalise why the ethics-of-care approach would work in the case of the South African HE system.

6.2 Kant's moral theory as the substructure of ethics of care

In Chapter 2, I referred to the principle of good will as a substructure of care ethics. The principle of good will is drawn from Kant's (2002) deontological ethics, which relates to acting out of duty, and relies on principles to highlight moral actions. The morality of an action is not based on whether that action itself is right or wrong, and it does not care much about the consequences of the action. Kant believes that ethical actions follow universal moral laws (Wood, 2002:82), which then are accepted as the right thing to do. Wood's (2002) interpretation of Kant's (2002) moral law connects it to the supreme law of a country, which compels citizens to be obedient to the law. To explain how to be obedient to the supreme law, Wood (2002) highlights the practice of good will without restrictions, meaning that in Kant's moral law the

expectation is the adherence to the principle whether or not people agree or disagree with the principle. Wood (2002:92) also states that in Kant's moral law, actions have moral worth only if they are done out of duty.

If I use Kant's (2002) moral law as a lens to examine the transformation strategies in the HE institutions in my study, good will would be to ensure that the transformation strategies of the institutions in my study redress the disparities constructed by the apartheid system as tabulated in both White Paper 3 and White Paper for Post-School Education and Training. What I would examine is whether policymakers are motivated by either duty or bias, to change the status quo in HE. According to Kant's (2002) categorical imperatives, the maxim that should govern the practice of good will should be to make the practice of good will a universal law.

Considering that, when the White Papers in HE were enacted, the fundamental goals were to redress the disparities constructed by the apartheid system, which are tabulated clearly in the White Paper on post-school education and training today:

The institutional landscape is still reminiscent of apartheid, with disadvantaged institutions, especially those in rural areas of the former bantustans, still disadvantaged in terms of infrastructure, teaching facilities and staffing. Black students at formerly whites-only institutions have often been victims of racism, and female students have been victims of patriarchal practices and sexual harassment. Poorer students have to fit in with systems that were designed for students from relatively privileged backgrounds (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2013)

HE institutions need to make the disruption of the status quo a priority to ensure that transformation in HE is not delayed. This, according to Kant (2002), should be made into a true moral proposition that is looked at in a rational manner, instead of being driven by racial politics. According to Kant, we first have a perfect duty not to act by maxims that result in logical contradictions, but to ensure that the people are not the means to an end but the end itself.

To disrupt obstacles that hinder transformation in HE using Kant's (2002) moral law, policymakers need to understand:

The rational being must always consider itself as giving laws in a realm of ends ... Morality thus

consists in the reference of all action to that legislation through which alone a realm of ends is possible. But the legislation must be encountered in every rational being itself, and be able to arise from its will (Wood, 2002:84).

This assertion can be explained as a suggestion that emphasises the need to treat all human beings as ends, and not means to an end for other people. This assertion also explains that helping others is an obligation that should not be questioned.

6.3 An ethics of care as a context-bound approach toward rectitude and decision-making

When exploring the ethics of care alongside Kant's moral law, and as presented above, the ethics of care intentions is different as it does not say much about universal laws, except to explore how the effects of deferred social justice can be reduced. As I have mentioned in Chapter 5, Noddings (2003) defines the notion of ethical caring as a state of being in a relationship that is asymmetrical, but reciprocal. This relationship consists of a carer and the cared for. Noddings (1998:127) explains the asymmetry as a depiction of determinative positions of influence, which can be evenly portrayed in the mother and child relationship, and can be seen as both endearing and satisfying as they are assumed to come naturally. The analogy of the mother and child relationship is brought up to emphasise natural caring, which can easily produce satisfying results if policymakers can attempt to be empathetic to the plight of poor students. Noddings (2013) suggests that in the discourses of today "the effort should be directed to transforming the conditions that make caring difficult or impossible". Noddings (2003:24) explains ethics of care as doing the right thing, which is caring about others. Comparatively speaking, Kant's (2002) moral approach also lays emphasis on caring for others as the right thing to do, the difference between two being that the principled-based ethics caring is not seen as a proposition that progresses naturally, but a must as within the principles is respect for autonomy, which involves an ethical and legal duty to avoid harming others, and justice, while in the ethics of care the impetus is not turning away from those that need to be cared for.

With the above contrast, I rationally understand why Noddings (1998) would challenge the approach of caring from a principles-based approach, as this seems to brews conflict. Take the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) Amendment Act No. 46 of 2013 previously known as Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) Act 53 of 2003, and RDP, as

examples. This initiative is used as a universal principle in South Africa, and to ensure effective implementation, this initiative is enforced through a scorecard and other measures. Suffice it to say that because of the scorecard, some pockets of historically advantaged members of the South African society see this as reverse racism, as the penalty often makes them lose out on government business if their scorecard is not above board. The conflict arises when this group would believe that the current government is punishing them through these transformation vehicles, as they were privileged in the past. Amid this indignation, what the disgruntled group seem to overlook is that these initiatives are or were necessary, as the black majority also needs to participate in the economic mainstream as they were denied economic opportunities under the apartheid government. Blacks were at the bottom of the social order, even the schooling subsidy during apartheid was on sliding scale in favour of historically advantaged children, followed by Indians, then coloureds, with blacks at the bottom. Villette (2006), a writer for IOL, after her interview with Professor Graeme Bloch wrote: “Apartheid’s legacy in education lives on, and the poor are still getting a poorer education, according to education expert, Graeme Bloch”. Villette further wrote: “In 1953, finances for black and white schools were separated, and black children were given significantly less than white children. In 1975/76, the state spent R644 annually on each white pupil, R189 per Indian pupil, R139 on a coloured pupil, and only R42 on an African pupil” (Villette, 2016). If these figures were examined further, the group that is disgruntled, might be forgiven for thinking that maybe the apartheid practices are being reversed against them, as they might genuinely understand the social and political conditions that are the foundations of inequalities. If these dynamics are clearly understood, groups can start being empathetic, which would result in them knowing why they should care. This then can develop into the groups seeing why the government introduced such initiatives.

I have drawn from this excerpt to demonstrate the pervasive symbolic violence suffered by the majority of students from poor schools even in a democracy. To this day, the denial of access to HE, especially from those institutions with a history of advantage, is still endemic as the institutions seem to have a tendency to hold the poor students’ lack of capital that matches the cultures of the institutions against the students, yet these students are the sufferers of the predatory disproportionate apartheid system. Historically advantaged institutions demand proficiencies to safeguard the institutional international standards of operation. The conditions therefore that prevent natural caring to take place in the South African HE space are neoliberal

politics that inform public policy, thus pushing universities to want their academic programmes to be measured against the best institutions internationally, at the expense of democratic equity in HE. Despite the neoliberal ideology being a new phenomenon, it somehow embodies aspects of apartheid as this drive also fosters systematic bias, structural discrimination and asymmetrical power relations, that are naturally promoted by the mediums of instruction at all South African HE institutions that cater only for Afrikaans and English.

Considering that students from poor schools continue to jump through hoops to gain access into HE, how realistic are reverse racism claims? From my point of view, these claims are inaccurate as the majority of the historically disadvantaged students are still finding it hard to compete with historically advantaged students, as the poor students are mostly from poor schools, which lack the resources to prepare students for HE. Another challenge is these students are mostly second- and third-language speakers, which also is a major disadvantage, and that often relegates students from poor schools to the TVET route, as most HE institutions do not compromise regarding the language of instruction.

By contrast, and at the same time, blend the view of moral law with ethics of care while taking into account the challenges by which higher education is confronted, I draw from Noddings' (1998:128) explanation of the ethics of care practice. Noddings' claim is the ethics of care does not want to resolve questions of human morality, by defining situations as good or evil, right or wrong, and/or just and unjust, as I have attempted to expound with the scenarios above. Noddings' (2003) explanation of the ethics of care goes beyond a black and white thinking approach, as it reminds people of their responsibility towards each other. Noddings (2003) says showing responsibility towards each other is deep-seated in natural caring, which is mostly defined by shared values such as kinship. The actions of people who understand or care for each other often give attention to benevolence as a virtue, thus suggesting that benevolence is practiced with kindness, responsiveness and affinity.

If policymakers' intentions are to disrupt exclusionary rules and regulations at the HE institutions in my study, policymakers ought to be guided by the ethics of care, and would need to be keen to construct policies for reconciliation as the current policy framework at the universities in my study has deviated from the reconciliatory tone of the White Papers intended

for HE in South Africa. In the settings I have given in previous paragraphs to point at how policymaking has deviated from the reconciliatory tone of the new South Africa, I explicitly pointed at a deadlock in the contestations of realism in HE, which emphasises addressing dichotomies in HE, as without addressing the subject of difference, transformation in HE would be destined to fail, and would continue to create factions that emerge along colour lines. The factions I referred to in the study are those who are displeased with the distribution of equity, equality and the need. But then again, engendering equitable spaces in South Africa is necessary, because gaining access to many state polities is shaped by power relations and often leads to exclusions of some sort. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015:487) says that South Africa may have legislated equality, but invisible power structures in cultural patterns still exist, and these influence power relations in the society; hence, there still seems to be an exclusion of students in HE. According to Noddings (1998:129), the ethics of care can avoid the group dynamics because it is faithful to the ideal picture of self, and propagates the treatment of the other in a positive manner. Policymakers at the universities in my study ought to encourage social mobility for all students. This means their policies need to be aimed at the annihilation of asymmetrical pedagogical practices that seem to have been normalised, such as unfair competition. More than anything, competition can be acceptable if all students had had equal advantages before their attempt to gain access to HE.

My contention therefore is, that while using the ethics of care as a paradigm shift to disrupt the unequal power relations at universities, policymakers would need to approach access testing with empathy as lived experience of students from poor schools is often the reason the students seem incapacitated in relation to the attainment of HE opportunities. The motivation for policymaking should build equitable and supportive structures with the intention to accommodate any students who want HE opportunities, despite their social standing.

6.3.1 An ethics of care as a vehicle to decolonise organisational structures

I argued earlier that exclusion systems are cloaked beneath university cultures. To transform, their university policymakers may need to start by decolonising their organisational structures, as this would make them aware of it that poor schools are products of the repressive apartheid system, and therefore students from poor schools need not be judged severely as their

circumstances were forced upon them. To corroborate this assertion, Held (2006:10) suggests systems that attend to and meet the needs of the other are the crux of an ethics-of-care approach. She argues that human beings have been dependent on each other to live and progress for years, and “[p]rospects for human progress and flourishing hinge on the care that those needing it receive” (2006:10). This also suggests that when exploring systems to disrupt exclusive systems at universities, policymakers may also need to abandon the social norms that have been acceptable normalised standards in HE, which fundamentally reinforce social exclusion and disparities. For instance, in this study, nearly all institutions have in the past few years after White Paper 3, purportedly launched transformation programmes. Each institution developed a transformation strategy. Some have 2020 to 2040 transformation strategies, from which the anticipated outcome is to establish diversified HE institutions. Disappointingly enough, despite these strategies, a large number of students from poor schools remain alienated by the university system, which goes to show that the strategies employed by universities in my study still lack approaches that promote inclusion and social cohesion. Through Noddings’ (1998:129) ethics of care, caring communication with those affected by systematic exclusion is encouraged, as opposed to having institutions designing programmes that they deem suitable as that might also be seen as debasing, more so if institutions have a history of advantage. What is important in policymaking, from the ethics of care approach, institutions with the historical advantage should start accepting that the pervasive imbalances in higher education are a legacy of the apartheid education system, which intentionally deprived African students of the possibilities to function on a par as the other population groups, by allocating black students mediocre education opportunities so as to maintain the functionalist ethos of apartheid. Therefore, to avoid preserving or developing any system that stunts social mobility, and continues to devour the opportunities that can benefit students from poor schools, policymakers ought to take into account the reality of those who were deprived of opportunities, rather than try to embark on transformation as if the landscape is equitable.

6.3.2 An ethics of care as a departure from a functionalist approach favoured by most institutions in my study

It would be ideal if the conservative functionalist approach that seems to be retained through the TVET wing of the Department of Higher Education were reimagined. For instance, presently the

TVETs seem to attract a large number of students from poor schools, so this occurrence may still be seen as the systematic exclusion of poor students to maintain that social order. Plato's *The Republic* (2002) earliest view on functionalism corroborates my outlook, where he states that conservatism and radical elitism prefer inequity to maintain social order. It is from this perspective that I contend that inequality in HE can be changed only if policymakers open up toward the reconceptualisation of their transformation processes, instead of a functionalism outlook, that seem to promote a path for affluent students (HE) and a seeming path for poor students (TVETs). Slote (2007:10) says this can be achieved if policies embrace caring attitudes towards the other, rather than having an attitude of indifference. An attitude of indifference surfaces when policymakers develop policies that depict uniformity in schooling encounters while the schooling results narrate a story of disparity. Furthermore, an attitude of indifference is bred by the HE landscape in South Africa embracing neoliberal policies, resulting with most universities applying general principles with regard to how students are granted access to HE, which excludes a majority of students from poor schools. A caring attitude, on the other hand, would mean policy developments that have been conceptualised to accommodate previously marginalised students. A caring attitude would also mean the abandonment of systems that justify privilege, or any system that may seem to perpetuate structural injustice, such as the one I have identified in relation to the NBT, if the need is to promote coexistence and social cohesion. Noddings' (2003:22) ethics of care suggests that caring need to be about the creation of necessary conditions in which the marginalised can also thrive, as opposed to having a single-minded approach to inclusion.

6.3.3 Ethics of care as an extension of *ubuntu*

To deviate a bit, I want to affirm that caring, as a norm is nothing new in the South African social system. In Chapter 3, I referred to the concept of *ubuntu*, which carries similar attributes as the ethics of care, since it promotes collective co-existence. Broodryk (2006:6) explains this phenomenon as a way of life that highlights social and physical interdependence of people. My emphasis with this interpolation is to attempt to encourage policymakers to borrow from aspects of *ubuntu* to address challenges in HE, as *ubuntu* starts by looking within before extending yourself to others. This suggests that, as South Africa exists in a global ecosystem, the state would need to first and foremost begin by addressing local needs, using systems that are ideal for

South Africa, in order to take on the world. Held (2006:85) in her comment on the liberal morality, states:

Thinking of society's members as if they were fully independent, free and equal rational agents obscures and distorts the conditions of vast numbers of them at the very least and has the effect of making it more difficult to address the social and political issues that would be seen as relevant and appropriate if these conditions were more accurately portrayed and kept in view. The liberal portrayal of the self-sufficient individual enables the privileged to falsely imagine that dependencies hardly exist, and when they are obvious, to suppose they can be dealt with as private preferences, as when parents provide for their infants. The illusion that society is composed of free, equal independent individuals who can choose to be associated with one another or not obscures the reality that social cooperation is required as a precondition of autonomy.

From this excerpt, I also contend that in the disruption of alienating processes at universities in my study, policymakers need to reimagine their guidelines and rationale as nearly all rules that have been applied at the universities tend to be in indulgence of privately schooled, and former Model C students, which technically is a promotion of privilege, as I have referred to in the paragraphs above. Held (2006:87) also refers to Noddings, who warns against the annihilation of rules and principles when speaking from the perspective of the ethics of care, which is echoed by Slote (2007:12), who states that the norm should not be to apply a general rule of what is good, but rather pay attention to how the other person has experienced the world. Slote's (2007:12) perspective is in order to disrupt processes that are alienating to the other, institutions in my study need to develop processes with extended good will. Slote (2007) reasons that when taking the ethics of care path, it is necessary to concern yourself not only for "individual welfare but for good relationship".

6.3.4 An ethics of care from the critical theorist lens

The critical theorists' theoretical lens approach takes more of the social approach, although they relate to the ethics of care approach. For example, in relation to the effect that the systematic exclusion has on the students, the critical theorist focuses on how the social groups we belong to have an effect, or rather, in this case how the social groups of the students are affected. For example, Young (2011) speaks about ethical responsibility. The idea is that half the time, as a

people, we tend to have a binary definition of things, such as we would define the university system in South Africa, namely the historically advantaged institutions and historically disadvantaged institutions. In Young's (2011) perspective, these institutions are both products of structural injustice, and therefore we should not isolate one from the other, but rather move from inequities that were perpetuated by the structural injustice, and which are still perpetuated through the present policy frameworks.

The fundamental argument is that the plight of students from poor schools is a social problem. That these students need to apply effort, alone to get into university is ironic, considering that they come from schools without resources, and their lived experiences do not do anything to help their cause. Although privilege tends to be a contentious subject in South Africa today, as there are those that want to deny that privilege elevate students who attend former Model C schools and private schools whether black or white, the reality is that there are still underprivileged students that need assistance to gain access to higher education. Shifting the responsibility of desolate encounters experienced by students from poor schools to students themselves can never help us change this status quo until policymakers disrupt their processes to ensure equity. In Chapter 2, I referred to Freire (1985:48), who recommended that equitable strategies should be framed in a manner that ensures that everyone gets the necessary tools to be successful. In the practice of the ethics of care, this would suggest that the lived experiences of students from poor schools should be acknowledged. What I took from Freire's perspective, is that the HE institutions in my study need to start by acknowledging that the abilities of students who may want to study at these universities are shaped by different socio-economic backgrounds and academic encounters, and therefore it is vital that institutions develop structures that are elastic, in order to promote equity.

6.4 Conclusion

To conclude, I have aptly leant towards the ethics of care, as I find many discourses around the subject of inclusion in the South African circumstance abysmal, as they do not touch the subject of difference, which has become worse since the advent of the black middle class, such as the case of having black students from affluent schools, and others from poor schools. Most discourses tend to take a neoliberal approach, and depart from a detached position. It is as if

apartheid never happened. Certainly, South Africa has celebrated its 25th anniversary as a democracy, but it does not mean that the dawn of democracy meant equality, as the majority of the students I am discussing come from historically disadvantaged communities, which are to this day still disadvantaged. Also, I found that the issue of inclusion is tacked onto systems that are comprised of structural injustice.

With this discourse therefore, I endeavour to defend a philosophy that justifies collaborative beliefs that promote caring to disrupt overt and covert exclusion of students within the universities in my study. This viewpoint is conceptualised to demonstrate that the historical encounters of the students from poor schools affect their present circumstances in HE, and this will continue to be the case if systemic inequality is not disrupted in HE. The present HE setting requires possibilities to enhance inclusive processes. The South African HE institutions need to see themselves as conduits for healing, which could readily engender social justice by offering students from poor schools a new lease of life as their schooling backgrounds have rendered them ineffectual. The HE institutions need to show sensitivity and work towards the accommodation of the poor students. My far-reaching interpretation of HE in the previous chapter is that HE was designed for the affluent, especially if we revert to how institutions are pressured by evaluating agencies. This will forever produce failure for students from poor schools as at their worst they might lack academic excellence, as well monetary resources to buy into HE. In order to accommodate the poor students, policymakers ought to acknowledge that students from affluent schools always trump students from poor backgrounds in academic achievements since their neighbourhoods have a knock-on effect on the meagre proficiency they present after school. What is important is a changed mind-set, and acceptance that obstacles exist, and that in order for students from poor schools to prosper, they need people who believe in them, and who readily care for their welfare.

Chapter 7

AN IMPLICATION OF AN ETHICS OF CARE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES OF STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I described compassion that comes through an ethics of care as a medium towards the attainment of social justice in HE. I defended an integrated approach that encompasses deontological ethics as principles, and an ethics of care to disrupt the external exclusion of students from poor schools from HE. Additionally, I commented on what I deem as a functionalist approach that seems to be favoured by the HE sector through its tendency to promote classism. The favoured functionalist approach appears to immortalise globalisation, which in turn immortalise inequality, albeit its adverse consequences that include poverty, inequality, and unemployment, which in HE have the negative ramifications manifested as the perpetual exclusion of students from poor schools in HE.

Consequently, in the previous chapters I pointed at several factors that denote that globalisation continues to reintroduce asymmetrical pedagogical practices, classism and racism in HE, while the principles of *ubuntu*, which have guided African societies or communities, seem to be annihilated. Because of these suppositions, I suggest decoloniality to be used as a lens to identify features that may still be disaffecting to students from poor schools. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015:489) informed this outlook when in his explanation that through decoloniality, we can be informed of on-going struggles against inhumanity, unmasking coloniality as an underside of the modern world. I also envisage that decoloniality can equally drive processes that can eradicate disparities, and promote equitable encounters to ensure that whoever wishes to gain access to HE be given that opportunity, as opposed to having some pushed towards the TVET stream, as TVET stream will also be burdened sooner or later. I have also indicated that it is quite unfair to push students towards a system that is equally unfair to students. I indicated earlier that their throughput is equally bothersome, as students drop out, especially if they were allowed to carry subjects. According to the interviewee with whom I discussed the plight of TVET students, some students end up finishing a course that could have taken three years to finish, in five or six years. On the basis of these arguments, in this concluding chapter, I intend to validate the espousal of

and implication of an ethics of care as a paradigm that is suitable to drive transformation in HE. I also offer the contribution of this study to research, and attempts to respond to possible criticism, as well open space for future studies.

Below I begin with the outline of the study, before getting into the fundamentals of my argument.

7.2 Delineation of the dissertation

My endeavours in the previous chapters of this study were to investigate why there still seems to be a systematic exclusion of students from poor schools in HE in the Western Cape, even after the ministry of higher education and training enacted policy frameworks that speak to redress of the past imbalances, starting with Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education of 1997, and followed by the White Paper for Post-school Education and Training: Building on Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post-school Education of 2013. To continue my investigation, the main question and secondary questions were asked. “Do universities in the Western Cape provide sufficient support to help poor students gain access to higher education?” The sub-questions followed. What do universities in the Western Cape categorise as their roles in ensuring social justice for all students? What strategies do universities in the Western Cape have in place to support poor students gain access to higher education? And, in what ways have these strategies been influenced by an ethics of care?

To respond to the aforementioned questions, I used baseline data to describe the HE and training institution contours. I have also gone through this baseline data to discuss from a defined setting. Alongside the baseline data I analysed the statistical evidence of the demographics that is presented by my alma mater (SU) on its website, which demonstrates that only a minority of black South Africans attend the SU. The baseline data and the statistical evidence also helped to place my argument into perspective in that they presented evidence that allowed me to justify why it is deemed necessary for many black students to seek HE for social mobility, and why there seems to be a stream of students who want to get into the HAIs. For instance, the HDIs are located in the areas that are economically arid and students may consider moving to better institutions for social mobility. I have referred to this in Chapter 6, and supported it with a quote from WPPSET, which corroborates my contention, and states that the historically disadvantaged

institutions are still as they were during apartheid, especially those in the rural areas. The HDIs were under resourced during apartheid and they still are today. In the apartheid era, the strategy was to ensure that social mobility for black peoples had to come at a very slow pace, if it was attained at all. Dr Hendrik Verwoerd's speech, quoted in subsection 4.1.2.1, that justifies the refusal of granting blacks rights to social mobility as specified in Pampallis (1991:184). In the present milieu (Cloete 2006) argue that government subsidies follow students to HAIs The analysis of the baseline data also signified the absence of a black university in the Western Cape, which may slightly insinuate that black people went to the Western Cape for employment purposes only. On the other hand, it could be that black students were supposed to attend black only universities in the Bantustans, as the Western Cape wanted to cater for white and coloured students, even though there were black people in the Cape.

In Chapter 2, I explored contemporary philosophical approaches that uphold caring, and the attainment of justice to rationalise the inclusion of students from poor schools in the HE stream. This suggests my exploration of the tenets of critical theory, the theory of disruption and social theorists' discourses on oppression and class domination, democratic education, and social connection to rationalise their perspectives on the inclusion of those that have been disenfranchised by the system in order to suggest ways that could improve on the transformation processes of the universities under study. I have also explored an ethics of care to locate how equity and equality can be attained when taking a caring approach. I have used these approaches to gain insights on how one-sidedness can be undermined during policymaking. With these views, I envisage that borrowing from each of the perspectives I have mentioned above could bring about an integrated ethics of care approach that could be able to address the South African HE challenges. In essence, the idea in this chapter has been to develop a restructured paradigm, which advocates for a compassionate approach in an endeavour purposefully to engender social justice at the universities in my study.

In the analysis of critical theory, I began with the explanation of South Africa's social structure using Horkheimer's materialist outlook to expand on the concrete nature of the system that need policy overhauls. This is followed by Freire's anecdote of the landowners and the peasants to express that at some point people as well as, or organisations can sometimes become subservient or compliant to pressures of their roles. I have also alluded to McLaren's explanation of the

asymmetrical power relations and social contradictions in the social order, and the emphasis that teachers of pedagogy should never stop asking questions on why things are as they are. The analogy of landowners and the peasants that I used communicate the power relationships that I perceived between the universities in my study and students from poor schools. Although the universities have a dominant role over students in general, in this case both the universities and students are somewhat repressed by the neoliberal ideology with which the university system has aligned itself. The universities want to be recognised globally, and this makes the university policymakers overlook local needs, which are geared towards the attainment of social justice in favour of a system that promotes western-oriented norms. The students at the same time are also pressured to seek upward mobility although HE encounters, especially for poor students, as the conviction is that after gaining HE, these students would be able to gain employment, and that would improve their livelihoods. These pressures are described by Alatas (2000:23) as the processes used for domination by the imperial ideology that is driven through globalisation.

From this point of view I have read Horkheimer's philosophy as expressing that the university system can be liberated away from global domination if the bureaucratic principles can be made to more caring regarding their dehumanising systems and practices, in that they would begin with fulfilling the local needs before leaping outward by wanting to be measured against the best international universities. Through Alatas (2000) I have also shown that South Africa is under the tutelage of the West that is if we look at the desire of the institutions to be recognised against the best universities in the world. My attempt has been to show that globalisation is more the refined associate of coloniality, because instead of imposed rules of engagement, nation states affiliate. Unfortunately this solidifies inequality like in the past, as if students do not show proficiency that is required at universities to gain access, even NSFAS can never help them.

Additionally, through the result of an analysis of critical pedagogy literature, I have suggested the need for policymakers to address dynamics surrounding power and knowledge, and other dynamics that promote classism through their policies, as these dynamics tend to be entrenched into what societies deem as passable norms. I have also intimated that these passable norms seem to be the ones distressing HE. Because these passable norms are secured in the university structures, I therefore declare the need for policymakers to question the passable norms, even though they are often unnoticed, as they lie hidden within accepted university cultures.

To tackle the distress in HE, my rationalisation is that innovative disruption would be the best approach to dismantle the distress in HE, as it is flexible enough to allow for a fresh start as opposed to an integration of new policies on old policies. Universities such as CPUT have an advantage of being relatively new institutions, and they could have easily had a fresh start, which they did. That is, if we look at the demographical statistics at this institution, which reflect that the majority of students are black, but CPUT like the other institutions in my study is pressured by the global flow, and this has encouraged the delay in the establishment of policies that could be accommodative to African students, like the elevation of an African language into an academic language. Instead, like the other three universities in my study, the quest is to recruit students from the rest of Africa to ensure that the institution gets better ratings. Meanwhile, South African black students continue to suffer symbolic violence as, instead of being embraced by this university, they continue to be assimilated into either English or Afrikaans.

To disrupt these practices I have advocated for the use of an ethics of care, which I refer to as a compassionate approach to inclusion, and that through an ethics of care, policymakers may possibly be able to address transformation challenges at their universities, especially those conditions that make caring difficult. To conclude this chapter I have described the pervasive obstacles as those symbols that are perpetuated by class distinction and the gap in the economic substructures, as the analysis indicates that the gaps that exist are mostly defined by social inequalities. Slote (2007:10) declares that it is necessary that policymakers not only look at the disruption of policies to promote individuals, but to encourage good a relationship that comes with social cohesion.

In Chapter 3, I have expounded on globalisation and how it has placed the South African HE sector at a crossroads in that it has pushed the sector to sacrifice its local priorities for global norms. I have also explained the patterns of involuntary pressure of globalisation and how it has forced South Africa to forgo local programmes such as the RDP that were developed to restructure the country away from the asymmetrical ideologies of apartheid, and engender social justice. RDP carried the ethos of *ubuntu*, which Broodryk (2006) outlines as comradeship that places its emphasis on social and physical interdependence of people. I also introduced my lived experience to outline my understanding of *ubuntu*, and to explain that *ubuntu* is not a new phenomenon to South Africa. Africans have from time immemorial navigated their lives through

ubuntu as a moral compass. The analysis of the chapter points at globalisation as an economic vehicle that has completely relegated all that is meant to be ethical in relation to the way of life and replaced it with neoliberal ideology, which normalises unfair competition that is a norm in a free market system, with detrimental effects for all South African polities, including higher education.

To illustrate the effects of globalisation on HE, I pointed at the empirical #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall campaigns that highlighted inequality economic substructures that result in some students being unable to gain access to HE because of various reasons that include affordability and exclusions that relate to the asymmetry of previous education encounters. I also referred to the timing of this involuntary globalisation pressure, as it overwhelmed South Africa around 1998, which affected South Africa around the time the country needed an economic overhaul to include the historically disadvantaged in the economy, on top of having to overcome the economic hiatus that was effected by sanctions from the first world during the 1980s because of the apartheid ideology. I have also drawn from Altbach (2004), Ball (2001), Bunting and Cloete (2010) and Habermas (2005) who surmise that globalisation is here to stay and that policymakers need to develop policies that show coherence between national and international needs.

With the understanding of the effect of globalisation in HE, Chapter 4 explains the paradoxes in the interpretation of White Paper 3 and WPPSET, and which should be a concern for policymakers as these issues tend to present university systems as repressive. I have used the admissions processes of the institutions in my study as examples. The analysis presented the processes as antagonistic towards the students from poor schools; hence, the majority of poor students seem to be relegated to TVETs. Through deconstructive analyses I also intimated that the paradoxes within the White Papers might have allowed policymakers at the institutions in my study to use their own interpretations of certain clauses. Ramdass (2009:118) affirms these struggles and blames globalisation for them. His argument is around circumventing situations that shut poor students out in preparation for the fourth industrial revolution. Ramdass also refers to the need for monitoring and evaluation interventions that would prevent the exclusion of any students.

In Chapter 5, I used philosophical lenses such as culture, socio-economics, and ethics to investigate the roles of universities in guaranteeing social justice for all students. I also investigated what the institutions have in place to ensure that poor students are not excluded by the institutions' systems, and whether whatever systems they have in place are influenced by the ethics of care. From this investigation, I discovered that the institutions have up to an extent processes that allow for historically disadvantaged students to gain access into HE, but the institution processes still seem to be selective towards who can be part of HE as in the past. This therefore suggests that at the two HAIs in my study, a large number of black students that are registered at these institutions are mostly from former Model C schools or private schools. My argument in this regard is that the processes that are in place do not engender social justice for all students. It seems as if the democratic processes are just as exclusive as the apartheid processes, because there still are rigid requirements for participation. Simons and Masschelein (2011:81) agree and then caution by stating:

According to Rancière, it is important to keep in mind that its opponents invented the term democracy. What opponents of democracy have in common is that they all refer to specific qualifications (ancientness, birth, richness, knowledge, virtue...) as sources of legitimate authority and bases on which power is justified. At this point, Rancière refers to Plato according to whom there is a kind anomaly: '[A] 'qualification' for power that he [Plato] calls ironically God's choice, meaning that mere chance: the power gained by drawing lots, the name of which is democracy'.

Basically, with this quotation I am justifying the need for the disruption of exclusion, and my contention is that institutions ought to take on the responsibility of the inclusion of this large group of students that seems to be deprived of this social mobility tool, which is HE.

In Chapter 6, I argued for an integrated ethics of care to repeal the systematic exclusion of black students from poor schools from gaining access to HE. That the parlance of the HE institutions focuses on 'proud traditions', 'academic excellence', 'motivated students' and top-rated universities in the world, suggests that the current challenges in HE are triggered by pressures of the neoliberal ideologies that normalise asymmetry. My contention is that the present system nullifies unequal education encounters that exist before students get to HE. Students are looked at as if they have similar academic encounters, whereas history indicates that by virtue of the

students' race, and social habitus the students have had unequal experiences, and therefore there is a justification for the disruption of the university structures, as they still seem to be disabling students. On this basis therefore, I endorse collaborative beliefs that promote caring and attainment of social justice to disrupt the current processes that are driven by intellectual imperialism. Caring approaches would ensure that students who wish to attain social mobility benefit. Additionally, collaborative approaches could reawaken the hunger for emancipation, as in this case both students and their university systems are equally oppressed by the need for world citizenship.

On the basis of these findings, the next section will illustrate the prospective of a transformed ethics of care in a university system that seeks to engender social justice. This expresses what ought to be the possibilities in the recruitment of poor students to HE.

7.3 Promoting compassionate encounters to engender social justice

This section endeavours to conscientise the policymakers at HE institutions about their responsibilities toward meeting local needs before attempting to satisfy international standards. This suggests the need for policymakers to establish systems that are compassionate, to ensure that those students that wish for higher education encounters are able to gain access to HE. Compassionate encounters, according to Noddings (2003), are encounters that are reminiscent of the memory of being cared for. This therefore is what is coined as the ethics of care, and that it comes naturally as it is evocative of a mother-child relationship.

Nevertheless, in previous chapters I have expounded upon university structures as being iniquitous by nature, and have seemingly become worse since HE institutions have embraced globalisation. In Chapter 4, I referred to WPPSET speaking to the desire to meet global needs with educational encounters, which is an indication that more than anything, delocalisation is somewhat driven by the government. Correspondingly, in Chapter 1 I referred to Christensen and Eyring (2011:xx), who speak to the dilemmas experienced by poor students worldwide. Christensen and Eyring refer to global cooperativeness as the root cause of all these challenges. To address this, the question that needs to be asked in this situation is, "What is more important, whether to address social inequalities or the quest to be on top of the leader board of world ranking agencies? To respond to this, Waghid (2010:38) contends that compassionate encounters can be

achieved in HE, if academics can collectively oppose exclusion of any form in HE, thus suggesting the inclusion of all who are keen on HE encounters, including their vulnerabilities. Bingham (2013:137) concurs and also mentions that to attain compassion, institutions need to reimagine their present positions in relation to education as progressivism has derailed a more venerable, content-driven education tradition. Christensen and Eyring (2011) explain that traditional universities benefit society not just by producing intelligent graduates and valuable discoveries, but also by fostering unmarketable yet invaluable intangibles such as social tolerance, personal responsibility, and respect for the rule of law. Each is a unique community of scholars in which lives as well as minds are shaped. How then can social justice be attained in a system that seems to be undemocratic in a democracy? My contention in this regard is that systems that normalise inequalities need to be disrupted through collectivism, and that through the realignment of mind-sets that are geared towards the improvement; betterment of humankind through caring encounters can be attained. Slote (2007) and Noddings (1998) suggest the displacement of ordinary self-interest for unselfish concern towards an individual who needs care. If inequality is not displaced it could produce unnecessary stress that comes in the form of protest actions that might be similar to those that set South Africa ablaze between 2015 and 2017. Essentially, according to Noddings, university policies and processes will forever produce conflict if altruism and benevolence are not drivers of policymaking. The perception is if altruism is key, social justice can be attained.

In the next sub-section, I present the indicators of an established culture of the practice of an ethics of care in policymaking.

7.3.1 The implications of caring in an educational setting

Noddings defines education as “a constellation of encounters, both planned and unplanned, that promote growth through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, understanding and appreciation” (Noddings, 2002:283). This suggests that if an ethics of care gets introduced in policymaking, teaching and learning would develop to an extent that it goes beyond book knowledge to facilitate moral values, positive and critical thinking, benevolence, and ethical values. In this regard, students are prepared for citizenship, and are made to become rational beings that are socially conscious. Waghid (2002:458) corroborates this notion and states that a need for a

different concept of the education system has emerged where universities excel in community service (in the form of providing integrated teaching and research-based services grounded in the knowledge production in the context of its application), rather than a model which focuses exclusively on conventional academic research and teaching, and that there is a great need for communities and universities to become jointly responsible for social change. My extrapolation of Waghid's assertion is that teaching and learning in a university setting should be able to prepare students to be change agents, and thus purporting the idea that students are able to navigate and contribute positively to their world as societies evolve.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018:18), on the other hand, suggests epistemic freedom to attain caring relations in an educational setting. He says:

Epistemic freedom is different from academic freedom. Academic freedom speaks to institutional autonomy of universities and rights to express diverse ideas including those critical of authorities and political leaders. Epistemic freedom is much broader and deeper. It speaks to cognitive justice; it draws our attention to the content of what it is that we are free to express and on whose terms. Cognitive justice as defined by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014) is premised on recognition of diverse ways of knowing by which human beings across the globe make sense of their existence. Epistemic freedom is about democratising 'knowledge' from its current rendition in the singular into its plural known as 'knowledges'. It is also ranged against overrepresentation of Eurocentric thought in knowledge, social theory, and education. Epistemic freedom is foundational in the broader decolonisation struggle because it enables the emergence of critical decolonial consciousness.

When making sense of Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2018) assertion, my contention is that his point of view of epistemic freedom suggests the inclusion of students in ways that express decoloniality within their encounters, and thus ensuring that all students whether affluent or poor, are able to take part in HE. If caring exists in HE, the systems would suppress the colonial hegemony, and embrace *ubuntu*, which is an epistemic identity that defines Africa. The current form of university encounters still seem to perpetuate the issues of race and class in that those that seem to enjoy HE encounters are propelled forward by privilege of previously exposed to encounters that match the required university proficiencies. To undermine this, the impetus has to be to develop "decolonial initiatives aimed at creating post-colonial futures, free from coloniality"

(Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018:18). Simons and Masschelein (2011:81) mention pedagogic subjectivation as an ideal intervention to effect caring in HE, as pedagogic subjectivation would be for verification of equality to authenticate if resources that are in place, are able to improve one's 'ability to' or one's 'potentiality'.

7.3.2 How can caring be imparted to students?

Friedrich, Jaastad and Popkewitz (2011: 64) say, "[e]quality and inequality are not facts to be checked but opinions that function as the practical grounds on which our thoughts are built". Therefore, if caring and compassion are premised in the educators' thoughts, it would be easy for educators to develop caring environments from which respectful and caring interactions are nurtured. The nurturing of interactions also means empowerment is not just about the concept, but allowing students' voices to speak and reasoning skills are taught. Biesta (2013:78) states that inculcating caring ought to begin with demystification and liberation from dogmatism, and that will close the gaps within pedagogical encounters. This approach has an ability dissolve self-imposed tutelage, and can promote an ethics of care. According to Waghid (2010:71), when imparting caring to students it is necessary to teach and show respect towards the students so that they can learn that even those who perpetrated acts of racial bigotry, gender oppression and cultural imperialism should be respected as persons, as this would leave doors open for reconciliation if there was some animosity. To safeguard such, universities ought to ensure there are visible policies that are protective of all students.

7.4 Significance of the study and its contribution to research

This study is significant in the field of Philosophy of Education, as it presents an idea that speaks of an integrated ethics of care that can disrupt the exclusionary features of HE that are mostly embedded in institutional cultures that include the delay in the general introduction of African languages as academic languages, the eradication of dominant cultures in HE, and the construction of policies with reconciliatory features. The notions I present for the realisation of this reconceptualised ethics of care include decoloniality, critical theory and social justice.

Because the White Paper of Post-School Education and Training seems progressive, although flooded with paradoxes, university governance and management, and policymakers seem to be

the ones that stand in the way of progress in HE, so it is imperative that they review their stances regarding gatekeeping. Another factor that I present here is the development of further debates on gatekeeping, be it the institutional culture, or whether the decision-makers of the institutions genuinely perpetrate the process of gatekeeping. I mentioned earlier that culture according to Van Wyk (2009), could be defined as the experiences of students at universities. So why then do the students continue to experience subjugating cultures even in a democracy? Considering that some institutional cultures have been cultivated for years, who then continues to nurture the culture, if not policymakers? Why is it important to them that the cultures of these institutions remain the same? With this study I therefore say there has not been much of a shift in HE systems from apartheid ideology, save for the enactment of White Papers, and that our democracy continues to be dominated by élites that have unequal influence over decisions, while others are excluded or marginalised from any significant influence over policymaking and its outcomes (Young, 2000:11). My conviction is that the issues of exclusion in HE need attention, and policymakers at HE institutions need also to decolonise their mind-sets when dealing with policy matters, so that whatever policymaking that comes into being, could engender social justice.

The study also wanted to indicate that, by virtue of the education discourse still referring historically advantaged and historically disadvantaged institutions, it may also contribute in the manner by which policymakers view their decision-making, and this also seems to call for change. Change referring to the purging of repressive culture in HE, which is still embedded within the HE structures. One of those is the denial of the existence of disadvantaged institution and students, as well as the denial of the university system being inclined to favour privileged students. This study therefore was set to dichotomise what uprooting the remnants of apartheid in HE should look like. Critical pedagogy and pedagogical subjectivation need be used for verification of processes, which is whether they are able to uproot the remnants of apartheid. The focus however, should be on the lack of momentum in transformation agendas of the institutions and their transference of the problems to the TVET stream.

This study also wanted to highlight constant pressures that are continually bugging education. Just as different organisations exerted pressure onto the apartheid regime to alter its course before democracy, the higher education system needs also to confront globalisation, as it is also

dictating its terms: pressurising HE institutions to vie for recognition on the international stage. That HE institutions are state parastatals has taken a back seat. Instead, they see themselves as contenders on the world stage, because of their efficacies. Bersin, Stempel and Van der Vyver (2014) validate this outlook by stating that organisations are pressured to “create a global skills supply chain in order to be positioned for success in innovation and performance.”

With the study, I also wanted to highlight that it is quite unfortunate that as organisations, higher education institutions work quite hard to fulfil the needs of the globalised world rather than local needs. An example of this is the drive to participate in the world efficiency competitions. What is more devastating, is that it is now more than two decades into our democracy, and South African is still struggling to improve on the racial inequities in HE.. In a way, this study wanted to provoke robust discussions about that would lead to upset the foundation that apartheid was built upon to the extent that structural injustice seize to exist.

Finally, when using the racial optic lens to analyse power relations at universities, I find myself wondering if HE institutions have any room at all for poor students, since they possess insufficient capital to navigate around traditional universities’ cultures. As a matter of fact, in many instances, that is speaking from own experiences poor students are like to suffer symbolic violence at HE institutions as nothing is designed for them. For example, assuming that a student needs to show ‘dexterity’ in the use of either the English or Afrikaans languages, and show a capacity to afford the costs of university fees, and also possesses adept aptitude that equals the universities’ quest for ‘high achiever’ recognition, to enter the historically advantaged universities, then a student from a historically disadvantaged background (mostly black students), enter any university already as second or third class citizens as neither English nor Afrikaans is his or her first language, and the two languages are the standard of the university system in South Africa. The reality is that most black students are proficient in the indigenous South African languages as these are the students’ arterial languages, and what we may also argue to be their only uniqueness in ‘overpowering’ environments that represents ‘white privilege’. The question that we need to ask would be: why these institutions cannot accept black students as they are? And why aren’t African languages developed into academic languages?

7.4.1 Hypothetical criticisms and possibilities for future studies

In this sub-section, I have presented myself with hypothetical criticisms that I pre-empt might arise from the findings of this study. In this process, I addressed perspectives that are intriguing and which may seem belligerent to deliberate upon in the study. I anticipate that the criticism might be drawn from the assertion that my findings revealed a systematic exclusion. To this I say that, each time higher education institutions speak on innovation and new developments, somehow black students from poor schools get left out on the basis of their previous education encounters that are disabling. I also know that a rhetoric that often comes through is that democracy was attained over 25 years ago, so why are black students not improving?

To that I say it could be that everything a black child has to go through at school is not designed for them, they end up having to learn languages that are not theirs, but are expected to catch up whether they like it or not. Additionally, the black students' socio-economic status does not give them peace of mind. Some come from families that do not have income at all, and others come from child-headed homes, which leave them worried about life, whether they have roof over their heads or not. Another anticipated question could be: do I think an ethics of care would improve their knowledge of Mathematics? And why do I not understand that TVETs are for students without capital for university education. My answer to that is I know that the ethics of care can never teach Mathematics, but that when I refer to the ethics of care I am evoking the memory of being cared for and empathy from our policymakers, particularly since they know that the students did not choose their lives. So if policymakers can operate from the premise of need, policymakers can see reasons for being flexible in their thinking. Besides, when students are well received through a policy framework, they may be able to start thinking critically and their outlook might change. More to the point, is through the ethics-of-care approach. Teaching and learning programmes can be able to impart programmes that promote moral values, positive and critical thinking, benevolence, and ethical values. These are opportunities that should be used to encourage critical thinking in understanding why there is a need for caring, especially in an institution and societies immersed with injustices and uncertainties.

7.5 Concluding summary of the dissertation

The study started by challenging the systems that seem constantly to keep poor students out of

spaces that can ensure social mobility. This research started a few years ago in the master's programme (2013–2014) where I researched the inclusion and exclusion of students from poor backgrounds and schools by two historically advantaged institutions in the Western Cape. My findings indicated that indeed the two institutions have practices that exclude the historically disadvantaged students. From 2015–2017 the students revolted stating almost what my findings presented, and to some extent the institutions admitted to their systems being somewhat inconsistent, and introduced new policies. I started working on this study at the height of the student protests in 2015, as a follow up on the master's study. The aim and objective of this study were to explore if things have changed now that the institutions had reimaged their policy framework. Essentially, I wanted to identify areas from the new policy framework that are still carrying an exclusive philosophy. From the findings I then explored if an integrated ethics of care could not disrupt the exclusive processes, and the possibilities are there, if policymakers are open to change.

Chapter 2 explicated the theoretical perspectives that relate to the inclusion of people to ensure that their worth and dignity are recognised. The analysis led to a realisation that to address the issues pertaining to the systematic exclusion of students, critical pedagogy should form part of this integrated ethics of care, alongside decoloniality, emancipation and democracy. Departing from that understanding, critical pedagogy forms a foundation to understand political, social and economic inequities, I have used critical education to comment on the social inequities that exist in HE. With an ethics of care, I have examined the responsiveness of institutions towards the needs of the students and the country at large, that is if the universities do see themselves playing a bigger part in the promotion of social cohesion within the South African society, and ensuring that social justice is attained by all. Finally, Chapter 2 revisits critical theorists hooks and Young to explore how universities address race and racism biases within their structures, and how far policymakers accepted responsibility for their part in creating structural injustice, and how far have they worked towards ensuring justice.

Chapter 3 explored the impact of globalisation in HE and found that the four institutions in the study have been affected differently owing to their legacies of advantage and disadvantage. The consequence of globalisation on all four has brought a desire to want to fulfil the criteria set by international competitiveness and related efficiency criteria, which exacerbate racial inequalities,

and promote classism. For instance, those that represent privilege tend to want to hold on to their prestige cultures for global recognition, which then alienates learners from poor schools. What is sad is the cardinal reality that learners from poor schools are black. This manifestation is often construed as the universities being racial exclusive, which may or may not be true, but a mere strategy triggered by the pressures of globalisation. In a way, the students themselves may possibly view their dilemmas as race related at UCT and SU, because of the symbols that these institutions hold, which were reminders of what could have driven their lived experiences. From this understanding therefore, my contention is since the four institutions are now obligated by law to recruit black students that in their majority survive just above the food poverty line, and others on state grants, coupled with their previous encounters, may not have prepared the students for these universities, what would be necessary at these institution would be policies that aim to engender social justice, and these situations need to be monitored to ascertain if these institutions are playing their part.

Chapter 4 offered evidence that the inconsistencies are somewhat purported by the ambiguities revealed through the deconstruction of the policy text. Since the institutions are somewhat geared towards global recognition, their systems are structured to leave out whoever does not contribute to these desires, so what seems to happen is that institutions tend to look for gaps within policy outlines, so that they do not have to carry the burden of students who do not match their needs. The students, who do not match these institutional ideals, get pushed to TVETs that equally exclude students if they do not make it after the interest tests.

Chapter 5 points at how systematic exclusion has been cushioned under the policy of meritocracy in the form of the policies such as the NBT, yet universities know that some students' encounters have not prepared them for these encounters. It is from these conceptualisations that in the chapter that followed I introduced an ethics of care process by which the status quo at universities I envisage can be disrupted in order to engender social justice.

To conclude, in Chapter 6 I have discussed the subject of inclusion in the South African context through an integrated ethics of care with is inclusive of critical and social theories, which is conceptualised to demonstrate that the historical encounters of the students from poor schools affect their present circumstances in HE, and this will continue to be the case if systemic

inequality is not disrupted in HE. I have also looked at the paradox within the HE institutional practices, especially since they tend to misrepresent their recruitment processes and present the university culture as open to all students notwithstanding their socio-economic standing, while in practice the institutions covertly exclude students they deem to have no potential for higher education opportunities, and these students often come from poor schools. Suffice it to say that the chapter refers to the plight of poor students and it attempts also to indicate that there is a need for policymakers to look at what is more detrimental, globalisation or delocalisation?

Chapter 8

THE JOURNEY OF MY BECOMING

8.1 The pilgrim's passage

The journey of my becoming has been the most testing, but satisfying trajectory. There were times I could hardly breathe, either with excitement or with indifference. Friends, foes, and acquaintances alike got lost in the midst. Slowly but surely, I became a recluse. My journey begun like those longest spiritual journeys people undertake for moral and spiritual significance that are sometimes elusive and starting to become as if one is running out of luck. Because of that, I look at the journey of my becoming as a pilgrim's passage. Additionally, I compare the journey of my becoming to a pilgrimage, because while conducting this study, I had to step out of myself in order to look at my topic without bias, particularly since the aim of the study was to look into disruption of alienating practices at the institutions in my study through an ethics of care. My confidence took a few knocks along the way. Nevertheless, I am now in the final stages of my journey, and my confidence is somewhat resuscitated, and I see that I am about to summit.

The journey of my becoming plucked me out of my comfort zone as I mentioned in the above paragraph, and it then threw me in far-flung spaces. Along the way I found myself imbued with the feelings of doubt, confusion, fear, and without a voice. On better days, I became certain, orderly, fearless, and visible. Despite this tempestuous climate, if I were to be asked if I knew then what I know now, would I consider pursuing the doctoral studies again, the answer is most certainly yes since my experiences have been more positive and productive, than the adverse. What has been most satisfying is that, through the pursuit of this doctoral study, I believe I have gained valuable knowledge, as I have become conversant with philosophical thought processes in that I have learnt to approach my arguments in a realistic manner. I have also learnt to reconcile perceptions in a methodical and coherent manner. I take my master's study, titled "External and internal exclusion of black undergraduate students from impoverished township schools in historically advantaged universities in the Western Cape" as example. In that study, I argued that the historically advantaged institutions deliberately excluded students from poor schools, and I did not look at other factors that could qualify the reasons behind the external and internal exclusion of students from the impoverished township schools. I attached the external

and internal exclusion of poor students only to the legacy of apartheid. But in this doctoral study, with the technical skills that I have gained, I learnt to delve deeper than the surface to understand external and internal exclusion, to try and unearth the factors that aggravate the situation at the HE institutions in my study. Through Young (1990; 2011), I discovered that politics is an integral part of the operation of a public education system, and in the middle of everything that is iniquitous in the South African HE sector. For example, the South African government opted to drop RDP fuelled-policies that focused on equity and redress of the imbalances created by the apartheid government, for policies such as GEAR that the government declared would stimulate faster economic growth, which was required to provide resources to reduce poverty. It was also aimed at reducing fiscal deficits, and decreasing barriers to trade and liberalising capital flows. To liberalise capital flow means to open borders so to compete in global platforms. By the time the ASGISA economic policy replaced GEAR in 2007, unemployment had increased by 1.2% from 21% per cent in 1996, which goes to say that the changing of the economic policy did not do South Africa any favours. Instead, the South African triple threat of ‘unemployment, poverty and inequality’ increased.

The policies that were established around this time also leaped outward to try and compete with universities such as Harvard, MIT and Oxford that are regularly ranked in the top tier of the ranking organisations, such as The World University Rankings and QS World University Rankings, among others. Basically, South African HE institutions want to compete with institutions that have the capacity to educate and cultivate future Nobel Prize winners. The subject of equity and inclusion seems to have taken a backseat. When I look at this, the questions that come to mind are: what are the odds that South African institutions can move out of the 500 to 800 level to the top tier if they still carry a burden of inequalities? And what are the odds that the newly proposed South African economic policy of economic transformation, inclusive growth, and competitiveness: Towards an economic strategy for South Africa will effectively impact upon HE?

Nevertheless, because of the nature of my study, I would also like to believe I have managed to highlight the areas that ought to be reimaged by the South African HE sector. Our government as a developing country need to be paid attention to, and become decisive about issues of inequality because if such issues are left alone, they tend to fester and become bigger problems.

An example of this would be the #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall campaigns. What is more, despite that globalisation has been the major influencer of the modern world, through the technical research skills I have since learnt that there is a need for the development of national needs instead of what is seen as the delocalisation of nation states. Our institutions of HE bear evidence of this. Our institutions can be rated as the top performing in Africa, but it would be a long shot before they may become the top performers in the world, because some of the countries, such as South Africa, are yet to get all the developing country problems right.

Doctoral studies could be intellectually challenging, and emotional draining. During the early stages of this journey, I had my fair share of emotional struggles. Those struggles made me genuinely believe that there are people made for this life, the life of a pilgrim or scholar, and I just I felt I was not one of them. There were so many tears, so many sleepless nights, and at some stage I was on the verge of giving up. Right there, at the time when I wanted to stop, I received an email from my promoter, Professor Waghid, which invited me to contribute a chapter in a book he was to co-edit alongside Dr Manthalu, *Education for Decoloniality and Decolonisation in Africa*. After the email, I started questioning my worth, wondering if that was something I was ready for, or even capable of doing. I was scared I would fail, as at the time I had lost my voice and train of thought. However, I wrote back and accepted the invitation. I am still not sure why but I did that. Professor Waghid's invitation found me running on empty. Just as soon as I sent back my reply I somehow felt revived. Although I was a bit alive, I needed time to reflect and think of a way forward. A day or two later, after a long reflection over how I got into that slump, I realised I needed to learn new work habits, and a healthier way of thinking about my studies. One of those habits was to read, read and read, and writing regularly. One can just say I realised that I needed to think more about the quality of work I want to exhibit.

Aside from this newly found hope, one of the things that struck me as the new thought processes started forming, and after my reflections over the email from my promoter, was the caring relationship that I witnessed that was shaping up. I interpreted my promoter's gesture as a technique by which my nurturer wanted to resuscitate the journey I was about to give up. I guess my promoter had an inkling that I might have wanted to give up, considering that I was not submitting any work. Noddings (1996, p. xiii) defines caring as a set of relational practices that foster mutual recognition and realisation, growth, development, protection, empowerment, and

human community, culture, and possibility. Noddings (2003) also mentions that in order to establish that ethics of a care relationship between the carer and the cared-for, the carer should show interest towards the cared-for, and in return the cared-for must also establish a caring ethic, and be both receptive and responsive. In my head, the email represented my promoter showing interest towards me as his student. As soon as I felt that hand pulling me up from the slump, I stood up and started writing again, and there was no looking back.

In a way, the caring relationship that I allude to between my promoter and myself is to say the least what my contention in the study was about. Students from poor schools have no economic backers, as some come from low income families, and others come from no incomes. We also have child-headed families, where in many instances the student that enters university is the head of a household. The only thing that exists for these students is the dream of upward mobility. So, the failure of HE institutions to grant them opportunities for upward mobility, means their livelihoods would never change at all, yet the situation they are in was never carved by them, but the circumstances of their birth: that is being poor. More importantly, the challenges that they are in, are compounded by the legacy of apartheid. Young (2011:xvii) says it is important to understand that the people who have been heavily affected by structural injustice do want to change their situations, but in many instances they do not have the power to do so. Therefore in thinking about shared responsibility, which she defines as collective ability, we must look at the agents with power and privilege that could help influence change in the lives of those who have suffered structural injustice. This corroborates what Held (2006:10) mentions, “prospects for human progress and flourishing hinge fundamentally on the care that those needing it receive”.

As I woke up from my slump, my doctoral study became a focal point once more. I found myself thinking this is exactly what supervisors and universities should be doing for their students. The caring relationships should not be restricted to undergraduate studies only, post-graduate students also need to be cared for, more the doctoral students, as half the time doctoral students are isolated, and lack support, just like the students from poor schools for whom I am advocating their case. In my journey of becoming, I have discovered that most universities talk a lot about inclusion and equity, but the actual practice is always an afterthought. This then suggests the reluctance to reimagine policies so they can redress imbalances.

My study was therefore focused on advocacy for the disruption of alienating features within the policy system. To achieve that I learnt that universities ought to want to help poor students. Evidence would show a commitment to the plight of poor students, as whether we want to believe it or not, students from poor schools are the victims of circumstances, and need all the help they can get. I do understand that to someone reading the journey of my becoming might think that doctoral students ought have endurance, as it is the path they chose themselves, somewhat like Harry Truman's saying, [i]f you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen'. What critics may not understand is that doctoral studies are independent study programmes, and they tends to isolate individuals from interactions, which doctoral students need from time to time, or any person for that matter. Doctoral students ought to be integrated to social and intellectual life of their institutions. I know it might not be the same, but when I did my BEd (Hons) at the University of the Western Cape, I was highly integrated into the social and intellectual life of UWC. I do not know whether it was because I was part of a large group of students with shared interests and backgrounds, or that the demands of the programme were not as demanding.

With the MEd programme, which I did at SU, I had a bit of social and intellectual life; maybe it was because we did a structured MEd programme. This meant we attended classes on Saturdays, and had robust debates even outside the classroom. The point here is that as a doctoral student, I feel I have never felt assimilated into the social and intellectual life of SU. Apart from the fact that I pursued my doctoral studies while working full-time, being assimilated into the social and intellectual life of SU, would have been difficult anyway because postgraduate students are few. This therefore suggests that black students are even fewer, and therefore it would have been difficult to find a group that I would easily socialise myself into. Not that I mean I do not want to socialise with people outside my race, I am only corroborating what Habermas (2005) claims about culture and language: that it easily bind people together. Also, in one of the chapters of this study, I have referred to the university culture that is hostile (see Chapter 3), so it is always easy to reject the system before it rejects you.

Anyway, when I started writing my chapter *Decoloniality and higher education transformation in South Africa*, that my promoter invited me to contribute, I was also starting to feel better about myself. I was a little motivated as I felt the caring from my nurturer even though I was still filled with self-doubt. Further, because in my study, from which I am making a case for disruption,

with my argument being an ethics of care as the way to assist students who need care to get into university system, I am a testimony that if institutions practice an ethics of care, students can up to an extend flourish.

The lifeline from my promoter dug me out of an abyss into which I had placed myself. In reality, in the hole I had buried myself in, I felt so alone, lost and mute. I was in tears, because I did not want to quit, and the pressure was unbearable. I experienced stress at work, home, and with my studies. I was juggling too many obligations, and there is only so much a person can take I really did not talk much about my stressful life to my supervisor or promoter, as I did not think it was appropriate. Half the time we tend to think, since as doctoral students we are matured students, we should be well equipped to handle academic stress, which is often untrue, all things considered. Nevertheless, when I look back, I now know I needed help even if it was someone who would just listen. What I have learnt in this journey is all students need to be cared for, especially doctoral students, as doctoral studies are quite a solitary voyage.

Considering that I almost gave up the journey, I wonder whether if I never received an email from my promoter, whether I would be in a position to write about my experience. Somehow, I believe it is necessary that universities develop systems that are designed to help doctoral students finish their studies. It would also be interesting to find out the degree of doctoral student attrition at SU, and how many may have been in the same predicament as I was in before being revived through the ethics of care.

8.2 Who am I?

As a budding scholar, I want to say I am on a journey of discovering who I am. What I know for sure is that I answer to the name my parents gave me. My parents shaped my formative years. Throughout my childhood my parents provided encouragement, support, and access to activities that to this day continue to enable my tenacity and resilience. This I discovered as soon as I started with my doctoral studies. I was fortunate to have had resilience awakened early in my life, as today I find the urges to get ahead, just as it urged me through this doctoral study. More than anything I found that resilience manifests itself differently according to settings. For example, in the workplace one might be seen as resilient, but easily defeated in their personal life. In other words, the idea of resilience is relative. Also, since resilience is dependent on a

person's interactions and the environment, it can change drastically if the environment weighs heavily on an individual. I am also relating this to my assertion that doctoral studies can sometimes be heavy, and it can break even the most resilient person. I therefore believe it is necessary that there should be a caring relationship between the supervisor and the student.

I arrived at SU already an adult learner, to begin my MEd Education Policy Studies journey. By that time I have had my own perception about how I view the world. I could hold my own in conversations about worldviews, but lacked the finesse of a scholar. By the time I arrived at SU, I had long been out of the education fraternity, and working in the cooperate world as a bursary fund administrator. This meant interacting with universities. When I arrived in the corporate world in 2004, change was more like an everyday phenomenon in higher education, so to be able to understand the world I was in, I went to register for a BEd (Hons) with UWC. This was a big shift from what I was used to, then the trajectory of my becoming emerged. There were a few lecturers at UWC that made me to want to go back to teach. Dr Thandi Ngcobo is one of those lecturers. She supervised my BEd (Hons) research project, and was really hard to please. Dr Ngcobo told me that she was going to mould me into a researcher even if it killed me. At the time, I could write, but I do not think I was a decent academic writer. I worked hard, completed my studies in record time. Dr Ngcobo really made an impression on me. I want to believe I also owe it to her that I started this journey, and am now on my way to completing my PhD studies. I am hoping to become a doctor so I can be able to contribute articles, and more chapters or even write a book because there is so much to discuss around education matters in South Africa. Early this year I have also managed to contribute a chapter in a book that my promoter was co-editing. Somehow I have become an author. I do not think this would have been possible without my promoter's encouragement. There were times when my promoter also asked me to look after his PGCE students when he was away. These few moments with the students also made me aware of how students interacted in lecture rooms, and this also allowed me to see the students' demographics first hand. And this also helped me triangulate my evidence.

Coincidentally, this was never a planned trajectory. I signed up for this because I wanted to gain enough information so that I can be able to make informed decisions around students' matters in my workspace, and I never left. So, because I was there I started thinking about studying towards a master's degree. I then decided to leave UWC for Stellenbosch. Dr Ngcobo also encouraged

me to get to SU, as I would be exposed to a cohort of lecturers who would add value to the journey of my becoming, and I took that leap of faith.

When I arrived at SU, never in my wildest of dreams did I think I would want to study for a PhD. I genuinely believed that after my master's degree, that would be the end of the road for me, as I did not want the stress that came with PhD studies. There is pressure to publish a few papers a year, and I really did not want to put myself through that. I already knew people close to me who had pursued their PhD studies, and I saw how demanding it could be. Let us not forget that I think I also lacked confidence. I knew who I was, or so I thought, and was content about it. Apart from me thinking less of my potential, I was at US, and I had to fight my way through, and at the time there were so many encounters I experienced that were subtly discriminatory, and fuelled with structural injustices, and that could make someone want to pack their bags and keep moving. I did not move on, I was just there, and had no intentions of leaving, even if it killed me. I was there for my MEd and attaining it was no option, it was a must. Because of certain conditions that came with structural injustice, I accepted that it was going to be a struggle for me to assert myself, outside the norm or be found to be a fit within the system. In such situations, Freire (1985:43) mentions that it is essential for the oppressed to realise that when they accept the struggle for humanisation they also accept, from that moment, their total responsibility for the struggle. They must realise they are fighting not merely for freedom from hunger, but freedom to create and to construct, to wonder and to venture. So I knew that I have to find a way to exist. I also knew I needed to be part of the system to understand it. Some of the undertones presented by the system that was not ready for expansion made me believe I was there for a reason. That I also experienced undertones first hand have encouraged me to undertake this study to highlight the plight of poor students in HE.

My stay has not been that easy, but not completely hard, as some lecturers made an effort to make students who are neither Afrikaans- nor English-speakers feel welcome. Our peers, mostly Afrikaans-speaking students, have been much more welcoming than the system. Anyway, I got used to the environment, and got to understand the system. Through this study, I have managed to understand the SU culture that on its own is a fortified institution that may change only when the custodians of the culture make a conscious decision to want to change. In the case of this study, the custodians of culture are policymakers. It is a pity that SU policymakers, try as they

might, somehow seem not to be making any inroads in the disruption of the alienating culture of the university, because it is no longer in books, it seems to be transmitted by people and symbols, including buildings (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015).

In thinking through this doctoral study, I believe I am glad that my career path and my promoter's path crossed as through Prof Waghid I received a new set of eyes to view the world. I was introduced to lenses critically to engage with, and analyse myself, and the world around me. My peers and I got introduced to my carer when we started with Philosophy of Education in our MEd programme. The discussions in that class were belligerent and provocative. There was no way we would show up in class just to get marks for attendance. Professor Waghid was present, and he expected his students to be present. In the midst of his robust discussions, the ethics of care seemed to be also part of his approach. Looking back, my contention is our caring relationship begun during the MEd Programme. My carer probably recognised the potential in me. In my whole life, I never really was the one in the spotlight, but suddenly there he was, challenging me. I really did not like it, as I preferred being under the radar, as there are no pressures in that space, my realm. The long and short of it, after submitting my MEd thesis my promoter told me that I should start working on my PhD proposal, I was taken aback, and rather flattered that my carer thought I have a potential to study further. I did not question his belief in me, I decided to start putting my proposal together, and the rest is history. The caring relationship had started to take shape, and it led to financial assistance for the first two years of my PhD study. And the financial assistance helped quite a bit, because as adult learners we already have family commitments on top of studies, and every penny counts so to have a set-up that alleviates the financial pressure is a most welcomed practice.

8.3 How have these caring encounters changed my thinking?

I am not sure if it was not a bit outlandish that I did not debate with my carer about his suggestion regarding me getting into the PhD programme. I am also not sure if my almost quitting should not be associated with me not understanding what I was really getting myself into. When the journey of my becoming begun, I had a regular job with regular problems, and when I took this journey upon myself, I acquired new sets of challenges that were compounded by poor sleeping habits. The poor sleeping habits came with being able to only work at night.

The fact that I started this journey as a reluctant scholar with an ambition to challenge myself, thus to push myself to new heights so to achieve a difficult goal, did not help my case. As a result, I almost quit in the middle of the journey. Despite the challenges along the way, this journey has refined my thinking as a scholar and my style of writing, which has enabled higher-order critical researching, reading, thinking, and writing skills. For the final product, I have also learnt to think independently, and hopefully my research will have a progressive effect on HE.

It is really difficult for me to single out clear aspects of my learning and caring encounters, because the journey of my becoming is a continuous process. There is a myriad of prospects to which the caring encounters have introduced me, but I can fairly single out two, which are my becoming a scholar and a researcher.

I have also become knowledgeable regarding research approaches, despite the fact that the journey of my becoming has not been an easy journey, and that it did not make me to want to complete it. Instead I have become more resilient and goal driven. I am just hoping that the second phase of the journey of my becoming will expose me to new research projects, and different kinds of opportunities, alongside different behaviours towards being an academic scholar.

I am hoping that the journey of my becoming, will offer new prospects in the academic world as a researcher and/or in the lecture room, so that I can utilise the skills and practice the caring relations that I have been introduced to, and that I have become accustomed to, and which I have established as a theory that drove my study. In the pursuit of future studies, I have also learnt that to get ahead I would need to seek continuous mentorship, especially if I want to seek a continuous pursuit of knowledge. Another aspect of doctoral studies that I have absorbed while conducting my studies, is that without a sounding board for your thought processes, one's development becomes stunted as a person might end up having a constricted view of aspects. In addition to this, the best advice I have received from my mentor or promoter, has been the importance of conducting research on a subject that I am passionate about; hence, my choice of topic and focus. From this advice, what I would pass on to new doctoral students, would be when starting their studies, they would need to ensure that the topics that they choose are not broad, and that the topics speak to their convictions, as this would help in relation to what the focus

would be. After having found a focus area, new doctoral students would need to read more around the topic.

I feel it is important to narrow down the focus as it helps one to get started sooner. It took me too long to get a focus because I started my study around the time of turbulence in higher education, during the 2015–2017 university protests, and my area of interest is HE. My study became like a cat and mouse game. I would think I got what I wanted to discuss, and things would change, or something else would happen, and once again I would have to go back to reimagine my focus. What I believe somewhat muddled my focus even further was the media commentary over the student protests, as the media commentary is seldom academic. Media commentary is somewhat sensational and biased, and I did not want those opinions to shape my thinking, but to some extent the media could shape one's thinking if one allows it to do so. In this case, it is important that people get to equip themselves with discerning skills, so sensational narratives could not influence them.

In my master's programme, my supervisor guided me so much; that in the present study my struggle was the need for my promoter to do the same. At the beginning of my study, I somewhat thought Professor Waghid would once more guide me, because I was a little scared and rather overwhelmed by the thought of having to study towards a PhD programme, so it was such a rude awakening when I discovered that I needed to find my way, with my carer being just a sounding board. And it took me almost a year to get the rhythm and to learn to work systematically. At the time I thought I was on the top of my game, another modification would be effected in higher education, and this meant I needed to realign my thoughts again. My advice to new doctoral students is perhaps that there is a need to look to topic areas that are not fluid. But if the topic speaks directly to them, the new doctoral students will need to find a way to plunge themselves into the project.

The next step after having established a focus and reading around it, it is important to find a theory that underpinned the study. This part was a bit cumbersome because one needs to look into different theories so one could find a theory that meets the needs of the study. Additionally, this part of the study becomes complex, as one also needs to comment on the theory if there are shortcomings that seem to spring out regarding the study. This was a struggle for me, because

my study looked at the pervasive injustices in HE. One cannot look at injustices without venturing into critical theories, even though I was looking at the disruption of the injustices through the ethics of care. Besides, I become a bit apprehensive when I get into the issues of race, because in South Africa people do not want to agree that white privilege still exists. Technically, my contention here is that it is important to read your theories so that when criticised, you are able to back your argument with a theory.

Once all the above is in order, one needs to establish a working system from which to approach the study. This also includes discipline, thus setting your priorities. I also struggled in this area, because of my work commitments. I mostly managed to focus on my study in the evenings, so by the time I got home, sometimes I would be exhausted. Because I did not have an established system, and somewhat lacked discipline I would come in and do something else – or choose to sleep when I needed to be working on my studies. To get ahead, a student needs to really get his or her priorities right. Avoid finding yourself in a slump or dropping out, it is important to find your rhythm. On top of having an established rhythm, it is also important constantly to communicate with your supervisor. I have been lucky, because my promoter or supervisor has a caring relationship approach, and he was often the one who would prompt me to write when he did not hear from me. I think more than anything, it would be of great help to meet with your supervisor often, but as a student one has to lead the discussion, thus tell the supervisor what needs to be discussed.

The best advice I could give to anyone is to study full-time if they can do so, as juggling work and study can be draining. Although it is sometimes helpful to tackle doctoral studies after one has gained experience, but having a job while studying is so disadvantageous, as it takes a toll on one's health, and it can also make you take longer to complete your studies.

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